THE QUEST FOR A TAME WHITE MAN

COLONIAL POLICY AND INDIGENOUS REACTION IN MADANG

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This thesis is my own work.

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'My informant's summary gave me the clue to the history of the cargo movement in the southern Madang Province from 1871 until the present day: the people's search for either two buttons to press, one labelled 'Tame European' and the other 'Cargo Deity'.'

Peter Lawrence

(1982:59)

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The results of the 1992 national elections in Papua New Guinea, produced a curious outcome in the Madang Province. Two Europeans were elected to represent the people of the Province, one in an open electorate and the other as the regional member. Nor was this European representation an isolated incident in the Madang Province. On the Rai coast, for the same elections, two European planters had been approached by electors who asked them to stand in that seat. Of even more interest, however, was the fact that the two Europeans who chose to stand were not the only outsiders to secure a seat in the national parliament representing the people of Madang. Two highlanders were also elected, one at the time of the general election and the other shortly thereafter in a by-election. These results clearly raise the question as to why the electors in four of the seven seats in the Madang Province should prefer to be represented by outsiders to the province rather than by local people.

It could be argued that the many Madang people exhibit such clan and tribal jealousies that they prefer a person of non-Madang origin to go to the national assembly on their behalf rather than see a local rival gain office. However, such an argument

begs the question for even it were true, it does not explain why such behaviour should occur in the Madang province. Moreover, it does not explain why this behaviour appears to have been consistent. An examination of the national election results since 1968, reveals that the results of the 1992 election are not unique, and the people of the Madang province have frequently elected outsiders to represent them.

This thesis contends that part of the answer to this behaviour lies in the colonial history of the province. While the colonial history of the various areas of Papua New Guinea have some features in common, nevertheless there are also vast differences. Obviously, the colonial experiences of Papua, the New Guinea highlands and the New Guinea islands must be differ from each other because their history is different because each area was affected by different administrations over differing periods of time. However, these differences must also be true of smaller areas as well, and although, for example the colonial history of the people of the New Guinea islands may, in some ways be similar to that of the people of the north coast because they were controlled by the same administrations, they are certainly not identical. Thus it follows that if the colonial history of a particular area differs from that of another district, then the effect of the colonizing process on the people of that district must also differ.

Madang had a colonial history which lasted for eighty years and was influenced by a total of seven administrations. They were: The German New Guinea Company, the Imperial German Administration, the Australian Military Administration (ANMEF), the Australian Administration of the Mandated Territory, the Japanese Military Administration, the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU) and the Australian Administration of the Trustee Territory.

Peter Lawrence, who spent some thirty years studying the people of the southern Madang district said of the colonial process:

> A century of contact on the north-east coastline had seen the growth of two distinct institutions: on one hand, western modernization, the complex of economic, political and educational development by Europeans, and, on the other, the cargo movement, the people's own response to colonial rule (quoted in Lawrence 1971:168).

While this is a succinct summation of colonization in the Madang district, Lawrence's view, however, needs some modification. The development of the western institutions was inconsistent and haphazard. Moreover, the implementation of colonial policy, far from being uniform was often ad hoc and capricious. Indeed, had the various administrations purposely designed

their policies to create confusion among the local people, they could hardly have succeeded better. While it is true that part of the response of the people to the muddle of European policy and institutions was the manifestation of cargo movements, nevertheless, it can be shown that that was not the only response. Rather, there were a variety of responses to the changing situations in which the Madang people found themselves. To understand the responses of the people of Madang to the effects of colonization it is necessary to examine critically the colonial policies of the various administrations and assess their impact on the people of the region

An attempt to write a history of the Madang colonial experience, presents some problems. First, the Madang province is not a natural geographical or political entity, so although one can speak of the province as a unit, there are, in fact enormous geographical and cultural differences within the area. Indeed, it could be argued that it is pointless to write of the area at all because Madang as a unit has no real meaning. However, it is a political unit now and this surely justifies an investigation into its colonial past.

Second, the information derived from the colonizers on their colonial policy is often limited because much material was lost during the Second World War. Moreover, the official reports were often biased

because of the audience for whom they were written, and this is especially true of the reports written for the League of Nations and the United Nations. Nevertheless, enough information exists to be able to paint a fairly comprehensive picture of the colonial policies which were enforced by the various regimes on the people of the district.

Third, information regarding the effect of the colonial policies on the villagers is extremely limited in its breadth. Administrative field officers wrote reports, of varying quality. Some were critical and analytical while others were insensitive and unobservant. Missionaries, although often in a better position to observe the effect of colonization on their flock, where frequently not made privy to the real attitudes of the people with whom they came into contact. Anthropologists, especially Romola McSwain, Louise Morauta and Peter Lawrence are extremely useful as a source of determining the effect of colonization on some of the people of the region. However, as is the nature of anthropology, their studies, although detailed, are only of a limited areas.

Although it could be argued that the use of oral testimonies would have been a useful adjunct to written evidence, they have not been used because it was felt that the passage of time made the reliability of such information sometimes questionable. This decision, however, did not prevent my seeking the opinions of

several people, such as John Middleton, Angmai Bilas and John Hickey who were involved in the development of the Madang district, although any information they supplied was only used if it could be corroborated through other sources.

In spite of these limitations, this thesis will attempt to examine colonial policy and assess its impact on the people of the Madang district in order to achieve a greater understanding of the colonization process in that district and hence its present implications for these people.

CHAPTER ONE

THE GERMAN COLONY

The Germans first came to the north coast of New Guinea in 1885. Although they came into contact with relatively few people on the coastal fringes of the area, the effect they had on these people was hardly insignificant. In the vanguard of the German presence was the German New Guinea Company, whose only interest in the country was economic, and whose behaviour was rapacious and violent. The German Imperial administration, which replaced the New Guinea Company, was more enlightened, but commercial interests remained paramount and their colonial policy was designed accordingly. Paternalism replaced rapacity, but the policies imposed on the people of the Madang district disregarded traditional culture and set a pattern which other colonists would repeat for the next eighty years. The third influence for change was the German missionaries, whose activities undermined the culture and challenged the ideas of the villagers.

The Madang region is situated on the north coast of Papua New Guinea. The area is very rugged, with only the coastal plain and the Ramu valley having flat land. There are numerous mountain ranges within the region, comprising the Adelbert Range to the

north, the Schrader and the Bismarck ranges to the south and the uplifted limestone range of the Finisterre mountains which rise steeply form the sea in the south west. The Hansemann mountains rise just north of the present township of Madang. The most important river in the area is the Ramu, which rises in the highlands and travels 720 kilometres west to the sea and enters the ocean only a few miles east of the Sepik river. Unlike the Sepik, however, the Ramu river is navigable for only a short distance upstream as the lower reaches of the river are very swampy. There are numerous other rivers which punctuate the entire coastline and there are several islands off the coast. The largest are Karkar, Manam and Long Islands, all of which are still volcanically active. Because the area lies within the Ramu/Markham fault, the whole region is geologically active. Most of the land within the area is considered not to be suitable for commercial agricultural development, with the best land being that on Karkar island and the north coast region. The land in the Ramu river valley and along the coastal region, has limited commercial potential because of the seasonal rainfall and difficult topography of the areas (Eaton 1981:46). This area has the largest mix of languages in the country and the people of the region speak about one hundred and seventy five different ones. Most of these are non-Austronesian. The Austronesian

languages are confined to the islands and a few of the coastal villages (Wurm 1981:34).

Although the people of Madang district had been involved in local trade networks, they had been outside the trade routes of the white traders and so there had been no direct contact with Europeans until the arrival, in 1871, of the pioneer anthropologist, Nicholi Miklouho-Macklay. He succeeded in forming a friendly relationship with the local people but although he made three visits to the area to study the inhabitants of Astrolabe Bay, he made little impact on their lives, save to introduce some new plants to the area and to create speculation amongst the villagers as to his origin and the source of his power (Lawrence 1964:64). Miklouho-Maclay's other legacy to the region is the name of the Rai coast, which is probably a corruption of his name.

It is one of the ironies of history that Bismarck, who was so vehemently against the acquisition of colonies, should have been personally responsible for the German annexation of New Guinea. The acquisition occurred primarily to protect the labour supply of Samoan estates of the German planters and traders. The German companies in the Pacific had become fearful of the expansion of the British and the Australians into the region, not only because of the loss of trading posts in the Gilbert and Fiji Islands through British annexation, but also

because of the growing competition for the recruitment of labour throughout the Western Pacific. This was seriously undermining the availability of workers for the German plantations in the Pacific (Firth 1982:14). At the same time the Queensland Government, aware of German economic interests in the Pacific, was convinced that Germany would annex all of New Guinea and to prevent such a measure the Queenslanders hastily claimed the south eastern part of the island on behalf of Great Britain. This action simply confirmed to the German traders that their fears of being squeezed out of the area were not without foundation and so they, in turn, put pressure on the German Chancellor to consider official expansion into the area to protect existing German interests.

Adolf Hansemann, a German banker with extensive investments in the South Seas and a penchant for German colonial development, had conceived a grandiose plan in about 1880 for the colonization of New Guinea. Hansemann thought of New Guinea as a vast real estate development. He envisioned acquiring land from the locals, surveying it, subdividing it and selling it to floods of would-be settlers, primarily Germans from Australia, who would purchase the various plantation lots, thus producing huge profits for the company involved (Sack and Clark 1979:14). Bismarck, who was vigorously opposed to

the idea of direct government control in the Pacific, was prepared to agree with Hansemann's ideas as it appeased the German Pacific traders, while sparing the German Government the cost of colonization. Thus in November 1884, Germany claimed the northern part of the New Guinea mainland, calling it Kaiser Wilhelmsland (Firth 1982:17).

The Imperial Charter gave the New Guinea Company exclusive rights over the acquisition of land along the north coast, for Hansemann had assumed that there would be large tracts of vacant land just waiting to be occupied. However, the Company's assumptions were flawed. Since the locals were semi-nomadic, they required far more land for their survival than was immediately evident by the size of the villages. However, the sole criterion for land acquisition was local willingness to transfer it to the Germans in exchange for little more than paltry trinkets, regardless of whether the villagers needed the land or not, or indeed if they had any rights to it at all (Woodman papers 1932).

Although the German flag was raised in Friedrich Wilhelmshafen (now Madang Town) in 1884, settlement did not proceed immediately around the Astrolabe Bay area, for the Germans first settled in Finschhafen. In 1887, Jan Kubary, acting for the New Guinea Company, acquired 36,000 hectares between the Gogol and Gum Rivers from the Yabob and Bilbil Islanders.

The islanders were not the real owners of the land, for as Austronesians they were late comers to the area and had only a toehold in the area. However, when the real owners protested to the Company at a later date, they were ignored (Lawrence 1964:41). The Company did deal with the right people when it acquired, in 1892, for the price of two steel axes and a few trinkets, what is now part of the business district of Madang, from the local Yam people. Since these people subsequently had to borrow garden sites from relatives, they clearly had no idea that the Company intended taking their land permanently (ibid:67). So outrageous were most of the Company's claims that when they were later investigated by an imperial judge, sixteen of the twenty-five claims were invalidated, including all those which were larger than two hundred and fifty acres (Sack 1969:107).

The acquisition of land by the Company squeezed the villagers from their livelihood and poisoned the relations between the local people and the Germans from the beginning and, indeed, have remained the source of discontent ever since. Moreover, the hostility felt by the people of the district towards the Germans over the land issue meant that the Company was unable to exert sufficient control over the locals to maintain law and order and this helped keep settlers away from the north coast region in droves.

The New Guinea Company's rapacious approach to land acquisition was, however, not the only cause of the poor relations between the Germans and the people of the Madang district. The Germans' punitive and violent approach to law and order exacerbated an already uneasy relationship. Retribution against outbreaks of hostility was indiscriminate and frequently ineffective. When two Rhenish missionaries, who had tried to settle in Hatzfeldthafen in 1891, were killed, the Imperial Commissioner, Fritz Rose, burnt the nearby village of Simbini although there was no proof that the village was involved. A short time later, perhaps not surprisingly, a plantation overseer was killed in the same area. This time Fritz Rose did find evidence which suggested that the culprits were probably the Tobenam people. However, not content with just allowing his police to open fire on these people, he also sanctioned action against the Tobenam's neighbours as well (Firth 1982:32). such actions did not solve the continuing the hostilities in the area and the station at Hatzfeldthafen was forced to close later that year(Sack and Clark 1979:60). The same punitive attitude existed around Astrolabe Bay as well. When Curt von Hagen was murdered by two of his Buka guides at Stephansort in 1897, seven villages in the area were burnt during the search for the killers (Firth 1982:163).

The Company did try solving the law and order difficulties by attempting to establish a system of indirect rule by working through political elites. This proved to be less than satisfactory as the local leaders had influence over a relatively small number of people. Moreover, the Company had difficulty in establishing who the leaders were. Often the real men of influence preferred to remain anonymous. When the Company was able to establish relations with so-called friendly villages, the villagers would use their relations with the Germans primarily to act against traditional enemies and so any alliances had little effect in creating a climate of mutual understanding. Thus the Company created an atmosphere between themselves and the locals which ranged from distrust to open hostility.

Nor did the Company system of indentured labour endear the Germans to the people of the Madang district. The people of northern New Guinea previously had little to do with European traders, unlike the people of the Gazelle Peninsula or the Solomon Islands, and so there had been no economic links built up between the New Guineans and the Europeans in this area prior to colonization. However, the Germans now needed the people of the area to participate in the European economic system, either directly as labour on the plantations, or indirectly through trade in order to keep the Company

profitable until the plantations began producing. But the Company system of indentured labour proved very unpopular with the people of the Madang district. Initially some people, predominantly Siar and Kranget islanders who were persuaded by the Rhenish missionaries to do so, made themselves available for work (Sack and Clark 1979:109). However, they soon tired of working as they found that they could trade for what they wanted through the sale of artifacts (Firth 1982:28). Thus the Company had to import labour for their plantations.

Initially, Chinese coolies were recruited for the plantations, but malaria, dysentery and opium took a terrible toll. Nine hundred and eighty-eight were indentured in 1892 and of these only four hundred and twenty survived the first eight months. These were sent home and from then on only New Guineans were recruited (ibid:35). However, Kaiser Wilhelmsland quickly gained a reputation for appalling working conditions. To maintain the discipline the planters cut rations, flogged their workers or confined them to barracks, which at times were little more than pig styes. Although there were regulations to protect the labourers, these were flaunted by the planters on the grounds that violence was the only languages that New Guineans understood (ibid:29). Corporal punishment, they argued, produced effective justice because it instantly

showed who the boss was and without it, the plantation owners claimed, the labourers would rebel (Rowley 1958:140-142). Such was the effect of the disease and ill-treatment on the indentured labourers in Kaiser Wilhelmsland that the death rate ran at a staggering 40% (Firth 1982:37). This was an appalling comparison with the death rate among indentured workers in Fiji of 5.5% and in Queensland of 6.2% (ibid:171). The mortality rate for those recruited from the Bismarck Archipelago was 50%, which Fritz Rose thought was shocking and Albert Hahl, the German Administrator, declared to the Colonial Department in 1900 that: 'About ten thousand labourers lie buried in the country around Astrolabe Bay', which was a sad indictment on the New Guinea Company's labour policy (Frith 1982:101). It is therefore hardly surprising that the brutality which passed for law and order in the colony made the people of the district reluctant to involve themselves with the Germans and preferred not to offer themselves for recruitment. Indeed, in 1894, for example, less than one quarter of indentured labourers in Kaiser Wilhelmsland came from the immediate area (ibid :35) and several years later Fritz Rose was still having only limited success in recruiting local labour (ibid:101).

The New Guinea Company's development of New Guinea was proving to be a disaster. Theory in

Berlin was quite different from practice in New Guinea. Tropical disease had taken its toll. The original company headquarters had been moved from Finschhafen to Friedrich Wilhelmshafen in 1891 when Finschhafen was found to be an area rife with malaria, causing a large loss of life among the German employees. On the north coast, the local people resented the German intrusion to the extent that the Company could not guarantee the physical or economic security of the settlers. While it is true that the Company had very limited support from the German Armed Forces to try to pacify the local people, nevertheless, the task the Forces faced was made so much more difficult by the policies of the Company itself when it deprived the people of the Madang district of their land, then exacerbated the situation by the indiscriminate use of violence. It was this punitive attitude of the Company which deprived the settlers of a reliable labour force and helped to make the settlement of northern New Guinea a commercial failure. Indeed, in 1899 there were less than one hundred settlers in Kaiser Wilhelmsland producing between them only one hundred and forty seven tonnes of copra (Hempenstall 1978:173).

By the end of the Nineteenth Century, however, the attitude in Berlin towards colonization had changed and the New Guinea Company was able to come

to an agreement with the Imperial Government whereby the latter assumed responsibility for the administration and the cost of the colony. Albert Hahl was made the Imperial Administrator and was able to use the knowledge he had gained when working in Africa, together with the observations he made while employed as the Imperial Judge in New Britain to formulate an ordered and rational rule for New Guinea.

Hahl determined that in order to secure economic investment the colony needed to be able to guarantee three things; land, labour and law and he set about developing policies which would achieve this. He realised that those areas which had local disquiet were generally those areas which had disputed boundaries and such disputes had to be eliminated if white settlers were to be attracted to the region. Thus, local land owners were far more protected from settlers by Hahl than they had been from the New Guinea Company. First, Hahl tried to limit plantation size to no more than two hundred and fifty acres because he realised that the New Guinean's land tended to be scattered, rather than concentrated in one area, and small plantations were less likely to disrupt the local way of life (Sack 1968:110-111). Second, Hahl tried to acquire waste lands which he could sell to would-be planters, rather than have the colonists dealing directly with the locals. Third,

Hahl tried to solve the problem of the dispossessed by setting up reserves for them from land bought back from the new owners. Finally, Hahl only allowed land to be sold for cultivation when the rights of the land owners had been investigated and the land had been correctly surveyed. But, in spite of this rational and apparently humane approach, these reforms were primarily for the benefit of the German settlers rather than for the people of the Kaiser Whilhelmsland and land acquisition continued. Indeed, by 1914, the Germans had in their possession some 33,000 hectares around Astrolabe Bay (Lawrence 1964:40).

Hahl also tried to solve the problem of drawing the Madangs into the colonial system. Since Kaiser Wilhelmsland had acquired the poor reputation in its treatment of indentured workers, it had become increasingly difficult to attract imported labour. Thus the co-operation of the people of the Madang district was vital to the success of the plantations around Astrolabe Bay. Hahl approached the problem from several different fronts. In 1903, he introduced the concept of forced labour. Each adult male was expected to work for at least two months a year building roads, draining swamps and other public works (Sack and Clark 1979:293). Forced labour was a source of great discontent. It undermined the work of the village as men could no longer garden or

fish. Nor could the women set about their tasks with security since the village, now deprived of its warriors, was exposed to the hostility of its neighbours. Indeed, so unpopular was the use of forced labour that the Germans found they had to watch the labourers very carefully or they would simply disappear into the bush (ibid:279). In 1907, Hahl introduced the head tax as an incentive for the Madangs either to find paid employment or to enter the cash economy. Hahl introduced a sliding scale of payments valued between five and ten marks, depending on the economic development of an area. Exempted from the head tax were those people who were employed by Europeans or were indentured workers. Although forced labour remained an option, the payment of the head tax rapidly became the preferred way in which the Madangs paid their obligations (ibid :308). To involve the people of the area even further in the cash economy, Hahl forbade transactions between the Europeans and the locals in any form of traditional currency, including shell money (ibid :220). All work was to be paid for in marks. Hahl also encouraged the development of an indigenous copra industry. Coconut trees were to be planted 'in an efficient manner' (ibid:329) and the sale of whole coconuts was forbidden (ibid:217). Even though the local copra was not always of the best quality, Hahl viewed his economic reforms as a success, since, by

1910, indigenous copra production far exceeded that of the European settlers on the north coast (ibid :313).

Hahl tried to solve the law and order difficulties by introducing the type of indirect rule which had been used in the German African colonies. Thus, he appointed a person whom he considered had the ability to strengthen German influence within a group of villagers. Basically, the luluai (a term originating in New Britain), made sure that the German instructions were carried out, whether it be helping in the collection of the head tax, supplying forced labour or acting as an agent of the police (Firth 1982:74). By 1911, the number of organised villages in Kaiser Wilhelmsland stretched from Hansa Bay to Finschhafen as well as parts of Karkar and Manam Islands while the numbers of luluais who had been appointed numbered sixty-seven. As a result, it was claimed that 'Government instructions are obeyed everywhere ' (Sack and Clark 1979:322).

However, for the entire period of the Imperial occupation of Kaiser Wilhelmsland, relations between the people of the north coast and the Germans were extremely poor, with the former maintaining a state of intermittent hostility. Under Company rule these hostilities had manifested themselves mainly in the murder of isolated missionaries and planters, but under the Imperial administration they became even

more intense. In 1904, the Yam people of Kranget, Siar and Bilia Islands as well as the people from Yabob and Bilbil Islands, conspired to overthrow the administration and murder all the Europeans in Friedrich Wilhemshafen. There appeared to have been a variety of motives for their actions. The Yam people on Kranget Island had been forced to surrender part of their island to the Rhenish missionary, which was a double blow for them since they had already lost their gardens and fishing grounds on the mainland opposite. The Siar and Bilia people had also been unable to prevent the Germans from encroaching on their traditional grounds. These people also objected to the system of compulsory labour and the missionary attacks on their male cults, both of which were seriously undermining their way of life (Sack 1973:108). One member of the conspiracy, Nalon of Bilia, however, apparently wishing to ingratiate himself with the Germans, betrayed the plot. The police were able to repel the attackers, killing one of the rebels (Hempenstall 1978:181-182). Although no Europeans were killed, indeed, most were unaware that an attack had even taken place, German retribution was swift. The six ring leaders were promptly tired and executed. It was, however, the Bilbil people upon whom the greatest German wrath fell. Although originally part of the plot, the Bilbil withdrew from the conspiracy

before the attack actually occurred, but they were seen to be the greatest trouble makers. However, before any punishment could be carried out the Bilbil fled to the Rai coast, where they had long established trading connections. It was not until the following year, when they tried to settle beside the Gogol river, that the German authorities were able to catch up with them. Nine Bilbils were shot by the police and fifteen were sent to New Britain as forced labourers. Their island was confiscated and the villagers were settled on the mainland (Sack and Clark 1979:265).

Nor were hostilities confined to the area around Astrolabe Bay. Anti-German feelings were strong on the Rai coast (ibid:292), and on the north coast around Hatzfeldthafen, the local people were continually aggressive towards the colonizers. In 1910, the people in the villages around Bogia, probably resentful of missionary interference in trying to stop infanticide and abortion and fearful of losing their land, conspired to kill the district officer on his way back to Madang Town and kill all the Europeans around Hansa Bay and Bogia. The conspiracy was betrayed, but Hahl, instead of seeking retribution, simply appointed luluais to the villages in the area (ibid:322).

As with the Bilbil, Hahl, however, was less merciful with those he viewed as long term

recalcitrants. In 1908, a Malay bird hunter was killed in the Hatzfeldthafen area and the villages of Tobenam and Kaiten were punished. In 1910, Hahl decided to make a concentrated effort to pacify the area once and for all and so sent a light cruiser, the S.M. Nurnberg, to fire shells into Kaiten village (ibid:322). The next year the Germans were able to introduce their administration into the area.

Although Hahl claimed to have introduced administrative organization along the coast of Kaiser Wilhelmsland, any effective German control, it was limited by the social and geographical conditions of the region, a fact recognised by Hahl himself (ibid :365). The village structure of the local people posed several problems for Hahl in trying to establish his own political authority. On the one hand, he did not fear a general uprising for there were too many little village entities which were too disorganized for a general rebellion. Moreover, many villagers valued the German presence as a means of protection against traditional enemies or as the suppliers of trade goods. However, Hahl also realised that although the existence of these little groups precluded any major opposition to German rule, the fragmentary nature of New Guinea society made it very difficult to incorporate it into the German administration (Firth 1982:111). Often, the appointment of a luluai could actually cause the

deterioration of relations between the Germans and the locals, rather than improving them. Hahl found that the person with the most influence in the village was not necessarily the appointed luluai. Indeed , the villager with the real status and influence would avoid such a position since it could compromise his standing with his people, although he would resent the German appointee because he felt that his traditional powers were being undermined (Sack and Clark 1979:279).

The nature of the terrain in Kaiser Wilhelmsland also made government control difficult. While German warships might be effective against coastal villages they had little effect against the villagers themselves, who could retreat into the bush or hills until the Germans left the area. Nor could the Germans protect those coastal villages which had lost man power through forced or indentured labour from attacks from the mountain tribes (ibid:307). The Germans simply lacked the man power to be able to exert extensive or effective control. They were reliant on only a few naval vessels and the Imperial finances ran to just six hundred guns for the whole of the New Guinea colony. Of these six hundred guns, however, one hundred and fifty were assigned to the north coast region, while only fifty were sent to each of Rabaul, Namatanai, Manus, Aitape and Morobe, clearly indicating the disproportionate difficulties the Germans had in this area (Firth 1982:110).

However, the so-called revolt provided more evidence of German paranoia that it did for overt action on the part of the people of the Madang district. Indeed, it would seem that there was no conspiracy at all and the whole event was concocted by an indentured labourer, Sizau, who, upon returning home, found that his wife had left him to live on Siar Island with another man. To revenge himself, he took evidence of magic to the district officer and claimed that it was part of the plot to overthrow the Europeans. This evidence fulfilled the German expectations that there would be another conspiracy and the assumed conspirators from Siar and Kranget Islands were hastily tried before a European court. However, while a lot of conflicting stories were heard, little real evidence was forthcoming. Nevertheless, the assumption of a plot was upheld and the innocent islanders were banished (Hannemann n.d.:28). The episode, although perhaps not as dramatic for the Germans as the 1904 rebellion, was indicative of the distrust which existed between them and the people of the district in general and the people from around Friedrich Wilhemshafen, in particular.

The annual report of the Imperial Administration in 1913-1914, indicated that although the coastline of Kaiser Wilhelmsland as well as the islands of Karkar and Bagabag were under German rule, the areas were, in fact, only under superficial control.

While, it would seem that the hostilities on the north coast around Bogia were caused primarily by the threat to the local society which were posed by the intrusive Europeans, it was land which remained at the root of the problems between the Germans and the people around Astrolabe Bay. Hahl had recognised that the claims of the New Guinea Company were the cause of intense resentment and he reached an agreement with the local people which would provide for a proper survey which would set aside land for the dispossessed and guaranteed fishing rights. But, in spite of these promises, the surveys failed to materialize and the alienation of Madang land continued (Hempenstall 1978:188).

So sullen and resentful had the people become over the continuing encroachment on to the land that the Germans feared there would be another revolt against the administration and, in 1912, another seemed to have appeared. The people from Siar, Kranget, Panutibun, Biliau, and Yabob Islands, angered that there lands had been acquired for future town development, were accused of conspiring to overthrow the German regime. The apparent ring leaders were tried and on being found guilty, were removed to the Bismarck Archipelago, while the Siar and Kranget islanders were resettled, either on the Rai coast, or at Megiar on the north coast (Sack and Clark 1979:354).

Moreover, any German advance into the hinterlands had been tentative and dangerous (Sack and Clark 1980:81-82). Even from the beginning of colonization, exploration, although encouraged, had proved disappointing. In 1895 Otto Ehlers had been shot by his bearers when he had tried to cross New Guinea from the Huon Gulf to the Gulf or Papua and although von Schleinitz sailed down the Sepik and Lauterbach discovered the fertile plains of the Ramu river in 1896, such discoveries were pointless as the Germans simply did not have the man power to be able to protect any settlers moving to these areas (Hempenstall 1978:172). Thus, the majority of the people in the Madang district remained outside the German sphere of influence.

However, those people who fell under the power of the Germans, were subject to land loss, exploitation and violence which created such conditions of mistrust between the colonizers and the colonized that it precluded any successful German development in Kaiser Wilhelmsland. This mistrust was further heightened by the fact that the principles by which the people of the Madang district lived were entirely ignored by the colonizers. The Germans completely neglected the rule of reciprocity, without which social order could not be maintained. In the local society, any work which was supplied, or any food which was given, placed the receiver under an

obligation to repay its equivalence in goods or labour when asked to do so. Failure to do this resulted in shame for the person with the undischarged obligation and the avoidance of shame was central to a person's social standing (Berndt and Lawrence 1971:19). However, when the Germans arrived, they took land from the villagers, used them for labour and yet were not prepared to reciprocate by sharing their great wealth. Indeed, far from being ashamed by such anti-social behaviour, the Germans were arrogant, mean and treated the local people harshly. It is little wonder that the people of the Madang district quickly became unwilling workers.

Nor could the villagers understand the German attitude towards ownership. The people of the Madang district did not believe that land could be permanently alienated, but the Germans, in spite of the promises to the contrary, made little effort to return alienated land, and indeed, continued to seize more. The villagers also believed that the fruit on any trees which they had planted belonged to them. However, the Germans punished, as trespass, anyone trying to recover it. The people of the Madang district also found that the Germans were inconsistent in their attitude towards livestock. On one hand, the Germans shot pigs which strayed into their gardens, but, conversely, when cattle strayed

into gardens of the villagers the Germans argued that it was because the fences were poorly constructed. Thus, compensation was not forth coming for damage done in either instance (Hannemann n.d.:28).

The Germans also disrupted the social order of the villages when they attempted to apply indirect rule of the people through the appointment of luluais. Such appointments were very much at odds with the existing loose hierarchical structure of the village where leadership could not be equated to a political situation. Although the headman might have been an important influence within the village, any authority he might have possessed came from his own personal prestige and not from the office itself (Reed 1943:51). To acquire such prestige, a village headman was expected to be skilled in a variety of occupations. He had to be a skilled hunter and gardener as well as knowing the correct rituals, dances, myths, and legends pertaining to his village (Lawrence 1971:80). Except for Manam Island, where only men from certain families could become leaders, the position in the rest of Madang was open to all (Meggitt 1971:193). However, the position was not of life tenure and as soon the power of the headman began to wane, usually because old age would prevent him from remaining as industrious as he once was, his position would come under threat and he might be replaced by another who could command greater

authority from among the villagers. Besides possessing traditional skills, the function of the headman was to maintain the social order within the village group and conciliation rather than impartial justice was far more useful in achieving this end. It was of little use to the headman to punish the villager for theft if the thief had so many sympathetic kin that greater social discord would be created by the latter action than by the original theft. It was far better for the headman to patch up the relationship and maintain the village harmony. Clearly then, the attempt to create a magisterial class based on the European idea of impartial justice, rather than the intricacies of consensus, and reliant on the prestige of the office itself was going to fail (Lawrence 1971:93).

The Germans expected the <u>luluai</u> to ignore his kinship ties by reporting the wrong doings of his kin to the authorities, an action clearly not in the <u>luluai's</u> own best interests, or those of his village. Nor was it in the interests of the village to condone the use of forced labour as it would leave the village in the vulnerable position of not being able to protect itself from traditional enemies. Only a very foolish headman would agree to do such a thing. Thus, because the traditional headman would wish to avoid being placed in the invidious position of having to work against his own and his villagers'

best interests he would select a person of no consequence to act as a go-between and to take the brunt of the wrath of both the German administration and the disgruntled villagers (Lawrence 1970:91). Of course there were some local people who tried to promote themselves by acting for the Germans, Nalon of Bilia was the obvious example, but generally those men whom the Germans appointed as luluais were not men of prestige (Lawrence 1971:91). Indeed, the luluais had so little authority, that the government found it necessary to appoint two police assistants called tultuls to help each carry out his duties (Hempenstall 1978:185).

Although there were six missionary groups in German New Guinea, only two, the Rhenish Mission Society, representing the Lutheran church and the Society of the Divine Word, a Roman Catholic order, worked in the area around Astrolabe Bay and the adjoining north coast. These missions formed the third influence for change among the people of the Madang district and their presence was, in some ways, even more devastating for the local culture than was the presence of the German New Guinea Company and the German Imperial administration.

The Rhenish mission saw its role as being in the service of Germany as well as that of God and, as such, it thought that it should try to be a civilizing agent to the local people (Firth

1982:138). The mission arrived in Friedrich Wilhelmshafen in 1887 and settled on Siar and Kranget Islands, away from the swampy and malaria-ridden mainland, as well as trying, unsuccessfully, to establish missions at Hatzfeldthafen on the north coast and Karkar Island, where it introduced smallpox (De'Ath 1981b:72). Marred by inexperience and disease, the mission failed to flourish and it had few converts (Firth 1982:150). The missionaries ascribed their failures to the lack of a sense of sinfulness among the local people who saw, therefore, no need to obtain salvation. However, it was the actions of missionaries themselves, which did much to alienate the people with whom they came into contact. The mission took local land for their mission stations and by 1906, in spite of having to withdraw from Hatzfeldthafen and Karkar Island, the Rhenish mission had acquired five hundred hectares of land at Nagada harbour as well as their Siar and Kranget acquisitions. Moreover, the missionaries also tended to side with the German authorities against the interests of the New Guineans (De'ath 1981b:72). Whereas other missionaries worked actively against forced and indentured labour, the Rhenish missionaries encouraged it on the grounds that it would make the New Guineans better people (Firth 1982:150). They also sought the help of the German authorities to stamp out local customs and

while Hahl concurred with the missionaries over issues such as infanticide and polygamy, even Hahl held up the right of the locals to maintain their traditional cults. The missionaries were frequently insensitive to the villagers and some were even flogged them in an effort to induce control (Hempenstall 1978:187). Thus, to the people of the Madang district, the missionaries seemed indistinguishable from the German authorities. Indeed, the Siars believed that it was the mission which had contacted the German administration and suggested that the Siars be rounded up and deported as their punishment for not accepting Christianity (Lacey 1973:23).

The conspiracy of 1904 was devastating for the mission, for it was clear that the Siar and Kranget islanders fully intended murdering all the missionaries and the Rhenish missionaries never fully trusted the local people again. However, the events of 1912 were even more of a fiasco. For with the deportation of the Siar and Kranget people, the mission was left with no congregation and no raison d'etre (Firth 1982:152). In retrospect, their failure was inevitable. The Rhenish mission had taken land from the people they wanted to convert, denigrated their customs, encouraged exploitation and behaved little differently from other Europeans. Their failure with the local people is reflected by

the fact that after twenty seven years of proselytising they had persuaded only ninety six Madangs to convert to Christianity (Firth 1982:152).

The Society of the Divine Word (S.V.D), unlike the Rhenish mission, was more concerned with the long haul and was determined to become self-sufficient before it starting proselytising. The mission originally had trouble obtaining land in Kaiser Wilhelmsland since the New Guinea Company saw it as a challenge to the more protestant and patriotic Rhenish Society. However, after settling first at Aitape in 1896, they were eventually granted land at Bogia because this area had proved difficult to control and it was hoped that the S.V.Ds would provide a good moral influence in the area (Wiltgen 1969:335). In 1904, when the New Guinea Company steamer stopped calling in at Bogia harbour, the mission decided to move to a more convenient location and acquired land from the Sek Islanders at Alexishafen. By the following year, the mission had planted fifteen hectares of coconuts and fourteen of rubber while the timber which had been cut during the plantation clearing was milled. Class rooms were set up and lessons were given, not just in reading and writing, but in also practical subjects such as carpentry. Such developments meant that the S.V.D.s brought the local people into their economic system as well as educating their children, so that by

1914, the S.D.V.s could claim to have 3,600 converts. No wonder Hahl liked these missionaries and thought them good for Germany (Firth 1982:154). Nevertheless, in spite of the apparent success of the S.D.V. mission, its entrenched position and possession of some one thousand hectares of land contributed to the growing disposition of the villagers around Astrolabe Bay (Hempenstall 1978:187).

By 1914, it was clear that Kaiser Wilhelmsland had failed to flourish as an economic proposition for the Germans. The colonial headquarters had been moved to Kokopo when the colony was taken over by the German Imperial administration because that was the entrepot of the copra trade in the south-west Pacific. Settlers had failed to come to the mainland and there was more than three times as much land under non-indigenous cultivation on the Bismarck Archipelago and in New Ireland than there was in Kaiser Wilhelmsland. Copra production in 1912 was, therefore, much greater in the islands, where it totalled 10,234 tonnes, compared with only 1,063 tonnes in the mainland (Firth 1982:180).

Whilst it is true that the disappointing results for the Germans were due in part to the poor nature of the soil and the difficult topography of the area, nevertheless, much of the blame for the failure of the colony to flourish must lie in the continued

hostility between the people of the Madang area and the Germans who had taken their land and dislocated their society.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ANMEF INTERLUDE

The Australian government acted rapidly to seize the German colonies in the Pacific at the outbreak of hostilities in 1914. Since the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Forces (ANMEF) met virtually no opposition, the occupation of the German territories south of the Equator was completed by September of that year. However, the seven years of ANMEF administration in New Guinea proved to be regressive. The administrators lacked colonial experience and were reliant on the German settlers for advice. But without the tempering effect of Hahl, these policies were concerned only with European economic development and were frequently enforced by punitive actions.

The occupation of Madang was a modest affair. The Australian troops landed at the main wharf where they were met by a German officer. The telephone exchange was then destroyed. This action was a symbolic rather than a strategic exercise as all the residents of Madang were within shouting distance of each other (Townsend 1968:80).

But while the invasion of German New Guinea was completed with relative ease, the new Australian administration faced a real problem with its lack of expertise in colonial affairs. This problem was

exacerbated in March 1915, when the German civil administration was replaced by ANMEF personnel. One solution to this problem would have been to allow Hubert Murray to administer both Papua and New Guinea. However, Murray's sympathetic attitude towards the indigenous people was perceived as not being in the best interests of big business and so he was denied the opportunity (Rowley 1971:58). Therefore, in the absence of alternatives, the Australians turned to the planters for advice on how to administer their new possessions. Happily, the primary interest for both parties, was the economic development of the colony. However, the methods used to achieve this were often counter productive.

Hahl's policies were continued, but they were not understood by the Australians and so were frequently abused. This, together with the influence of the planters, who were only concerned with immediate wartime profits, meant that the only real interest the Administration had in indigenous affairs was in relation to the supply of labour. So, far from developing better relations with the New Guineans, or even maintaining the status quo, the period of control under the ANMEF was a regressive one.

It was believed by the ANMEF administration that: 'success in tropical agriculture can be achieved only when labour is plentiful and paid for on a scale far below the standard of white men's wages' (Mackenzie

1934:228). But achieving both a plentiful labour supply and maintaining low wages proved to be very difficult. A maximun wage was set at five shillings a month, for which a labourer was expected to work ten hours a day, six days a week. The wage was inflexible and no allowance was made for initiative or incentive on the part of the labourer (Rowley 1958:157). Higher wages, it was argued, should be withheld from the local people 'until they learnt better how to use their earnings' (Lyng 1919:240). However, this attitude meant that the New Guineans increasingly avoided employment, especially as wartime prices decreased local purchasing power. Nor was this lack of enthusiasm helped by the fact that the Australians continued to enforce the harsh labour laws which they had inherited from the Germans. Corporal punishment, for example was readily employed although its use was forbidden in Papua. Even after the right of employers to employ flogging was withdrawn in 1915, much to the angst of the planters, the courts could still sentence labourers to be whipped for labour related offences and corporal punishment continued to be used in areas which were beyond the control of the court (Rowley 1958:137-147).

The Australians became corrupted by their surroundings and maintained the German legacy of violence with callous willingness. It was assumed that the locals would take bashings for granted and would

not resent such treatment, it being the only way to gain their respect and obedience (Mair 1948:15). One private, after only a month in New Guinea, typified this attitude in a letter home:

> I took one of them and gave him a good hideing (sic) which consisted of 36 good solid cuts...they worked very well after that but my arm was aching for about 4 hours. The nigger I gave the hiding too(sic) thinks no end of me and told all his cobbers I'm big feller boss which means I'm a very good and powerful man." (Piggott 1988:12).

With such treatment it is little wonder that there was difficulty in recruiting labour. This meant that the recruiters had to move further out into the uncontrolled regions such as the Sepik River area and the Bagasin area of the Madang district to fulfil the requirements of the planters. It is doubtful, however, if those recruited from these areas had much idea of the terms and conditions of indenture. But district officers did not ask too many questions and generally only omitted those men from taking up indenture who were obviously under age or who were in poor health. The administrative officers always assumed that the needs of business overrode the welfare of the local people (Rowley 1958:131).

The ANMEF also continued to collect a head tax, but

while the head tax under Hahl had been used as a device to bring the New Guineans into the European economic system, under the Australians it was seen simply as a revenue raiser. Thus, every male over the age of twelve who was physically capable of work and was not indentured or employed by a European was liable to a head tax of ten shillings (ibid:174). Even those areas which the Germans had thought to be inappropriate for tax collection because they lacked economic development, were now deemed to be liable to taxable at the discretion of the district officer and those men who could not pay the tax were used as forced labour. Such policies meant that New Guineans could be away from home for long periods of time either as an indentured plantation labourer or on forced labour detail and this situation lead to resentment and even violence (ibid 1958:125).

Where there was conflict, Australian inexperience, together with the belief that business interests were paramount, meant that keeping order took precedence over maintaining justice. German police methods were retained. This system took the form of a patrol made up of a small detachment of local men attached to a European, which moved into an area where there was a dispute. The European was frequently lacking in perception and would fail to see that the police often abused their power, raping and pillaging villages, rather than bringing law and order (ibid

:210-211). These patrols were frequently so ruthless that it can be said that the Australian forces brought a standard of government to the people of New Guinea unequalled since the days of the New Guinea Company.

In most ways the effect of the Occupation on Madang was typical of the rest of the colony beyond New Britain. The Australian commanders were really only concerned with Rabaul. Indeed, the fact that the official war history of New Guinea was entitled The Australians in Rabaul is indicative of the obsession the ANMEF had with that trading port and consequently the rest of the country was comparatively neglected. Thus the roads which the Germans had built, especially to the north of Madang Town, were allowed to deteriorate and the bridges wash away. Patrols beyond the township were limited and were not used to extend government influence or even maintain existing contacts. They usually occurred only when there were reports of trouble and so were generally punitive in nature. In August 1915, Lt. W.Ogilvy, acting on a report of hostility in the Bogia area, mounted a patrol in which three local men were shot. The next month a German planter, who had no right to be on Karkar was attacked on the island. Ogilvy, together with a detachment of forty indigenous police against one hundred and fifty Karkars, retaliated in a military-style campaign. Two Karkars were killed. Later that month, a patrol was sent to the Rai coast to

take action against a village which was still flying the German flag (Mackenzie 1934:310-312:Rowley 1958:40). Since Lt. Ogilvy was the brother of Major H.O. Ogilvy, the head of the Department of Native Affairs, it is clear that such aggressive actions were sanctioned at the highest level.

Not only did the Australians antagonise the New Guineans through their harsh treatment of them, but compounded the problem by allowing indigenous land to be further alienated. The expansion of plantations was encouraged, especially to the north of the town. Thus, the Siars found, when they were allowed to return from exile, that the development of the Siar plantation had left them with only four hundred and fifty acres of reserve. Moreover, all the large trees needed for the manufacture of trading canoes had been cut down (Mennis 1980:87).

Illustrative of the attitude and actions of the Australian military personnel were those of Jens Lyng, who arrived with the initial expeditionary force in 1914 and stayed for the duration, becoming the District Officer for Madang towards the end of the occupation. His ideas, many of which he published in the Rabaul Record in 1917, illustrated the prejudices, lack of foresight and the corruption which was typical of the Australian Administration and which he, in turn, ultimately inflicted on the population of Madang. Lyng, although an educated man, was greatly affected by

the German attitude towards the New Guinean people. He admitted that although he had initially been revolted by the idea of corporal punishment, he changed his mind when a Capuchin monk justified its usefulness on the grounds that it was a civilizing agent (Lyng 1925:193). He also concurred with the view put forth by a German missionary, Pater Kleintitschen, that the local people were ' deceitful, supersititious, callous, cowardly, avaricious, untruthful, thieving, hypocritical, ungrateful and lazy; in fact, ... would seem to be utterly beyond redemption' (Lyng 1919:164).

Like the rest of the Australian administration, Lyng put the economic development of the new colony above the welfare of the New Guinea people. As district officer, he was confronted with the problems associated with the recruiting system. He realized that it was impossible to be sure if boys were old enough to be legally indentured, or, indeed, if they understood the recruitment process at all. And although Lyng may not have been aware of the extent to which the recruiters had moved into the uncontrolled areas, he was certainly not unaware of the coercion and bribery which occurred between village leaders and the recruiters which led to the buying or kidnapping of boys for indenture (Lyng 1925:188). However, while Lyng might have acknowledged these problems he refused to make any reforms because, for, as he himself admitted, a closer inspection of the system would have

resulted in 'the whole economic machinery of the Possession coming to a standstill' (ibid:186). Indeed, Lyng admired the actions of the recruiters and settlers in opening up the country and assumed that any disruptions to the local people's way of life through these illegal activities was simply the unfortunate by-product of such pioneering work and of no real consequence (ibid :186).

Lyng's ignorance of local custom made his attempts at mediation a farce and must have left the Madangs confused and resentful of Australian justice. In one instance a dispute arose over the status of a young widow as to whether she should stay with her brother-in-law or be returned to her father. Lyng, as the local magistrate, decided on the former option. However, the girl returned to her father anyway and so provoked a further dispute, presumably because the bride price was not refunded. Lyng then publically and tactlessly asked the girl what she wanted to do and again returned her to her father. Her father promptly arranged for her to be marry again, at a bride price higher than the original one and so created even further antagonism between the two factions. To prevent further disputes, Lyng decided to resolve the problem by marrying the girl to one of his policemen (ibid:197).

Such an incident was not atypical of the hopeless and inefficient magistracy that passed for justice in

New Guinea. But, the problem of injustice was compounded by the Australian abuse of the powers of the luluais. The army officers seemed to have no real idea of their role but used the luluais as agents of the administration, even to the extent of allowing them to inflict corporal punishment on offenders, which made the luluais very unpopular with their own villagers. Moreover, they were harangued by the Australians for continuing to wear German insignia. No wonder Lyng found that the position of luluai was not embraced enthusiastically by the villagers (ibid:172).

Lyng was not deliberately cruel, but his racist and unenlightened attitudes, although a product of his time, made him insensitive to the plight of the local people. Thus, in spite of acknowledging the distress of the people of the Madang district, he justified their condition as being the result of their failure to adapt to a changing situation and acknowledge the dominance of the white man. So while he might recognize the difficulties which were involved in raising head tax for those with virtually no access to the cash economy, he, nevertheless, argued that its collection was necessary as a way of producing revenue (Lyng 1919:237). He could also argue that the decline in the local birthrate was due to the maternal apathy while ignoring the effect that the Australian labour policies had on it. Certainly, the wholesale removal of adult men from the villages gave the women less chance to produce a family and their increased

work load certainly mitigated against their wanting children (Lyng 1925:174).

ANMEF rule ended in 1921. The policies of the ANMEF had proved to be counterproductive to economic development. They failed in the Madang district because the occupying forces lacked the rational approach to such development which had been the hallmark of Hahl's administration and development in Madang had been neglected in favour of development in Rabaul. Moreover, the occupation had done little for race relations in the district. The ANMEF had been aggressive, unnecessarily violent and exploitative and while it is true that its activities brought more New Guineans into contact with Europeans, it can be argued that such contact was not a pleasant experience.

CHAPTER THREE

A 'C' CLASS MANDATE

In the period of the Mandate, between 1921 and 1941, the Australian administration's approach to native welfare was characterized by paternalism and parsimony since the primary focus of the its policy was to foster economic development for the benefit of big business and Australian settlers. Thus, while government attitude towards the local people was certainly less repressive than it had been under the ANMEF, it developed few policies which would benefit them. Much of the vacuum which was left by the administration's failure to provide services, was taken up by the missions and while in many instances they did an admirable job, their agenda often created confusion among those they sought to help.

In late 1920, Australia was awarded a 'C' class mandate by the principal Allied powers, which although not an outright takeover of the country, was for all practical purposes, an annexation, and in May 1921 the civil administration of New Guinea began. There were no immediate changes to the existing administration for, initially, the military personnel remained in charge under the administrator General Wisdom. There was little analysis of the complex problems that would be associated with governing the

mandate, which was hardly surprising since the acquisition of New Guinea was seen primarily as a commercial prize for services rendered during the First World War. Although it was assumed that being of British stock Australians would possess the innate ability to rule, the need for actual policies to develop the Territory, especially a native policy, was barely acknowledged. The Sydney Morning Herald made its ideas clear about the future of the Territory when it criticized General Wisdom's administration because it was run 'according to a narrow conception of what is good for the natives' (Mair 1948:14). Indeed, the primary policy of the Australian government appeared to have been the commercial exploitation of the Territory while avoiding of cost in its administration. Thus, even with the sale of the exappropriated German properties, the amount of money spent to maintain the existing services remained very limited.

The administration of the mandate was far less punative and violent than its predecessor had been. This was partly due to the fact that the Australian government had to supply an annual report to the League of Nations on its activities in the Territory, including an account of its relations with the indigenous people and so its policies on this issue were expected to have a more humanitarian approach than had previously been evident in Australian's relations with the local people. However, the lack of staff

numbers in the administration made it difficult to carry out more than routine patrols in those areas which were already under control and thus avoided, by necessity, incursions into uncontrolled regions which could have provoked violence.

Nevertheless, native policy remained vague. Local customs which were not repugnant to the general principles of humanity (Report on the Territory of New Guinea, hereafter TNG Report, 1914-1921:19) would be preserved, disease would be eradicated and village hygiene improved. Local agriculture would be encouraged. Education would be provided and the New Guineans would be introduced to civilization through the medium of paid employment, primarily as plantation labourers (Radi 1971:79). Frequently these policies clashed with commercial interests or were philosophically incompatible. Indigenous agriculture was not encouraged where it collided with European interests. Nor could village customs be preserved when large numbers of males were absent labouring on the plantations. Moreover, the administration assumed that at all times it knew what was best for the New Guineans. Consultation was virtually non-existent, which meant that while the administration might have been kinder than its predecessor, it was, nonetheless, paternalistic and authoritarian and failed to encourage local political development until just before the outbreak of the Second World War.

In Madang, just a staff of nine, including three medical personnel, was expected to administer some 374 villages bounded by an area to the mouth of the Ramu river in the west, east to Saidor and south towards the Central Highlands (TNG Report 1921-22:113). Patrols were limited and little could be done to bring new areas under control. Indeed, it was not until the mid-1920's that exploratory patrols were undertaken in any big way. In 1926 a patrol, covering some four hundred miles on foot, moved into the Upper Ramu and Markham valleys and penetrated the Bismarck and Finisterre mountains (TNG Report 1926-27:234). In later years the Rai coast and the Bogia hinterland were explored, as were the high points of the Bismarck Mountains, the area between the Ramu and Sepik rivers, parts of the Gogol valley and the Bagasin area. But even in the period immediately before the war in the Pacific, there were large parts of the district, such as the Adelbert Mountains, which had hardly been penetrated. Generally, the vast majority of patrols were for administrative purposes: to count heads, to lecture on hygiene, or to collect head taxes. To facilitate such administrative procedures and make supervision easier for patrol officers, the administration adopted a policy of collecting scattered families and amalgamating them into communities (TNG Report 1921-22:113). Communication with these villages remained difficult, however, since, with the exception

of the Madang to Alexishafen road, roads in the district remained no more than bridle tracks. As with the other parts of the Territory, as money became available from the sale of German property, the number of administrative personnel increased, but there were few improvements to the facilities in the district.

The Territory's main source of wealth was to be copra and it was on this premise that the administration's policies hinged. It was not, as it turned out, a very secure source of income since commodity prices fluctuated alarmingly. Moreover, it was an industry which required substantial land and labour. By 1932, 34,000 labourers were required to maintain production (TNP Report 1932-33:159). Hence, like the preceeding administrations, the Australian policies of direct concern to the local people related to the indenture system.

From 1921 the expropriation of German properties moved rapidly along. The Territory was seen as a reward for ex-servicemen, so, instead of returning the land to the original owners, the Commonwealth resumed it, although the existing rights and privileges of the New Guineans to hunting, fishing and gardening areas were preserved. Thus, the freehold plantations, totalling about 6,800 hectares, along the Madang coast and on Karkar Island, remained in European hands (Lawrence 1963:48). It could be argued that this alienated land made up only a small portion of the

total area of the Madang district, but the plantations were on the most fertile land and in the best situated areas. Even when there was a clear case of unjust exploitation, economic interests overrode those of the New Guineans. The land which the Biliau claimed as theirs now formed part of the Madang township and was not returned. Nor was all of the land which had supposedly been sold to Kubary, back in the nineteen century, returned to its original owners, in spite of an exhaustive inquiry by Justice Phillips in 1932. Phillips was meticulous in his enquiries and even walked the boundaries of the land between the Gogol and Gum rivers. He interviewed numerous local people in the area, all of whom declared that they had never sold any land to the Germans and that the Bilbil did not have rights to the land on which they now lived, let alone any right to sell it to the Germans some fifty years earlier (Woodman papers 1932). The Biblil, on the other hand, were afraid that if they claimed their land they would be banished again and so they denied ownership of any part of the mainland, even the clay areas which they had clearly used for years to make their pots (Mennis 1981:52). Phillips recognized that some of the land must belong to the Bilbil and returned a little of it to them, but the bulk of it was given to other villagers and the Bilbil were not repatriated to their island. Nor were the most productive lands restored to their rightful owners, for, in return for

compensation payment of £99, the Modilon-Yomba and Wagol plantations remained in European hands (Lawrence 1963:48).

While the loss of their land was devastating for those involved, this policy affected far fewer people in the Madang district than did the indenture system, which made an enormous impact on village life throughout the region. The administration might justify indenture by arguing that those who were indentured found a superior life on the plantations away from sorcery, fear, initiation, sickness and tabu (TNG Report 1932-33:161), however, the system was in direct opposition with the mandate's policy of encouraging village life and was indicative of the conflict which existed between native welfare and economic expedience. Certainly the new labour regulations which were introduced in 1922 were designed to give greater protection to indentured workers. Medical care on plantations was to be improved. The only disciplinary action employers could take was to withhold tobacco rations (TNP Report 1921-22:54). And, indeed, the administration did try to stamp out violence towards the New Guineans. Some Europeans, including a missionary from Bogia, were brought to trial for assault (Woodman papers 1931). But the battle for justice was very one sided while the penal provisions for labour related incidents still existed and the employers had far greater access to the courts than the villagers

did. Such one-sided justice was reflected in the 1927-1928 Annual Report, which recorded thirty-four prosecutions against employers for assault throughout the Territory but six hundred and twenty prosecutions against New Guineans for work-related offences such as neglect of work or desertion (TNG Report 1927-28:15).

In spite of the administration's assertions to the contrary, indenture was designed to be a cheap source of labour. Contracts were for three years which was about twice as long as the term in Papua, because it was claimed that it took that length of time to train a New Guinean effectively. If a labourer was to be re-engaged he was allowed to return to his village for only three months, which was just long enough for him to procreate (Mair 1948:139). Since the indentured workers were trained for little except labouring jobs, even after years of contact with Europeans most had no idea of how the benefits of European civilization were achieved. This meant that on returning to their villages most indentured New Guineans brought with them many misconceptions which produced results not envisioned by the administration

Closely related to indenture in its impact on traditional village life was the head tax. Policy on taxation was ambiguous. The administration thought that the head tax was justified on the grounds that the money raised from it was for the direct benefit of the natives of New Guinea since it was used to employ an anthropologist, supply medicines and education and to

encourage the development of indigenous plantations (Mair 1948:62). But it was not meant to be used as an inducement for villagers to join in the paid labour force. However, because Hahl had introduced it for this purpose the tax continued to have that effect. Indeed, the annual tax of ten shillings took no account of the villagers' actual access to the cash economy and this meant that men frequently had no option other than to leave their village for indentured work (Mair 1948:63).

Like most bureaucracies, the policies conceived in Rabaul were frequently at odds with practice in the field. In Madang, many of the field officers realized that there were problems associated with the tax system, for while those Madangs in the Astrolabe Bay area has little trouble in raising taxes, those in the remoter areas had real difficulties. Assistant District Officer Nurton found that the inhabitants of Long island had absolutely no source of income; they were visited twice a year by Chinese traders, to whom they sold their agricultural implements in order to pay their taxes (A.D.O.Nurton, Patrol Report, Sept., 1932). J.K. McCarthy refused to collect taxes from some villages in the Ramu valley because they had no access to cash (McCarthy Papers 1934-35). Patrol Officer Bloxham thought that it was inadvisable to collect head taxes from the newly opened up Bagasin area because its imposition would see ~~would~~ the introduction of indentured labour into the region (P.O. Bloxham Patrol

Report 1932-33). So unrealistic were some of the administration's demands, that it could be argued that the introduction of the head tax had more to do with being able to claim that new areas were under control, than it had with the capacity of the New Guineans to pay it.

While the administration might deny that the head tax was being used as an inducement for indentured labour, the assumption was held that this was exactly the case. The findings of L.G. Vial on the relationship between the introduction of the head tax and labour recruitment in the Morobe District were probably also true for the remoter parts of the Madang District. Vial concluded that:

> ...the normal development of a subdivision is a fairly rapid increase in the percentage of indentured labourers from nought to about 20% of adult males as it is brought under control. In this early stage the people recruit readily for the novelty of going away to work or to obtain the steel which they have seen to be much superior to their own implements. During the time between the first warning to prepare for taxation and two or three years after tax is first collected the figure rises to about 30% and then there is a gradual decline to 10% to 15% as other means of making money are discovered (Vial 1938:395).

Moreover, these newly recruited labourers were more

likely to leave the district altogether. Generally, the people of the Madang district were notorious for their disinclination to work outside the area (Reed 1943:217). However, recruitment figures in the Territory annual reports indicated that on average, over forty per cent of Madang workers were employed in other districts, primarily New Britain and Morobe. Since it would appear that plantation labour within the district could be supplied from villages near the plantations (TNG Report 1921-22:113), an arrangement which suited both the employer, who could do his own recruiting, and the employee, who could maintain close links with his village, it was, therefore, the people from the newly opened up areas, who needed a source of income, who filled the labour needs of other districts. This trend was even more evident when the Bulolo gold fields opened up (TNG Report 1937-38:40).

There were, however, as Vial suggests, reasons other than the imposition of a head tax which made some people in the district make themselves available for indenture. Certainly, some were attracted to the idea of adventure in the outside world, especially those who already had relatives indentured in other areas (Woodman Papers 1931). Indeed, a few Madang people had already shown themselves to be very adventurous, for six Bilbil men had travelled to German East Africa as policemen before World War I (Mennis 1982:27). Moreover, many of those recruited in the uncontrolled

areas were gullible villagers who were victims of unscrupulous recruiters rather than men seeking work just to pay the head tax (Downs papers 1938-39).

Of concern to the Australian administrative officers was the perceived decline in the birth rate which occurred with the removal of indentured males from their villages. Figures supplied by J.K.McCarthy appear to bear out these concerns. On Bagabag Island, between 1933 and 1935 the indenture rate was five to eight per cent of the total population and the population of the island remained static during that period. On Long Island, in the same period, where the indenture rate was between eight and ten per cent of the total population the population actually declined by nine per cent. Conversely, on Karkar Island, where seven per cent of the total population was indentured during this period, the population maintained a constant growth. McCarthy concluded that this stability occurred because the majority of indentured labourers were employed on the local plantations (McCarthy Papers 1934-35:1).

However, many in the district, especially those in areas of long contact with Europeans, preferred to avoid indenture altogether. Certainly, the consistently low level of re-recruitment among the Madangs, usually less than ten per cent, although comparable with other areas of New Guinea except for New Britain, clearly indicated that the locals preferred to find incomes in ways other than indenture

(TNG Report 1927-28:15). However, it was not easy for them to achieve access to the cash economy and little was done to promote their interests. Those people along the coast, especially those in the immediate vicinity of the town or plantations were able to raise funds for head tax by selling fruit and vegetables, but indigenous copra production was not developed because of opposition from plantation owners. Nor were many experts employed by the administration to help develop native plantations. By 1936, indigenous copra production was only a fraction of that produced by Europeans, which was a complete reversal of the success which Hahl had achieved twenty years earlier (Reed 1943:256). In Madang, it was assumed that it was the low price of copra, only four shillings a bag, which discouraged its production by the villagers (Downs papers 1938-39:3). However, such an assumption was somewhat simplistic, especially in view of the fact that even at these prices, one or two bags of copra would have gone some way towards paying off the head tax. Probably the major difficulty facing the village copra grower in Madang was lack of transport. Roads in Rabaul and New Ireland were far better and in those places copra was already producing local entrepreneurs (Radi 1971:131), but in Madang, copra was very difficult to move. Some villagers brought it up the coast to Madang Town by canoe. Indeed, one group, on the Rai coast, subscribed to buy a sailing boat, although they allowed it to fall into disrepair

(McCarthy papers 1934-35). However, most were forced to sell it to nearby plantations, which had better transport, be it punt, skiff or even steamer, and since they were a captive market, the villagers were usually paid low prices. The Lutherans complained to the administration about this exploitation, but there was little will on the part of the administration to act against the plantation owners. Where villagers were actively encouraged, either by administration officers or plantation owners, or both, as on Karkar, there was enthusiasm to grow and dry copra (McCarthy papers 1934-35). But such examples appear to be the exception rather than the rule and indigenous agriculture in the district was left to languish.

Although the administration did little to advance the indigenous economy, it was determined to improve living standards of the local people in other ways, but the implementation of its policies frequently disadvantaged the villagers involved. The native regulations which existed in Papua were introduced into New Guinea. These consisted of measures relating pimarily to health concerns such as the construction of latrines, the burial of the dead and the compulsory inoculation of villagers. Village houses were to be built to a certain standard and whole villages could be moved at the whim of the administration. Often hamlets were consolidated into villages for the convenience of the administration and to the detriment of the villagers, who subsequently could have long walks to

reach their gardens (TNG Report 1921-22:113). There was little, if any discussion with villagers about the introduction of these regulations, but, with fines of £2 to £3 being imposed for their non-observance, the penalties for breaking them were severe (Mair 1948:47).

If the administration did little for indigenous economic development in the Madang region, neither did it encourage local political development. In spite of the friendlier approach of the administration, especially towards the people in the more remote areas, the shift was really only from repression to paternalism. No thought was given to the idea of sharing political power. The administration continued to try imposing indirect rule through the appointment of luluais and tultuls. The function of the luluais, who were nominated by their people and appointed by the district officer on the recommendation of the patrol officer, was to act as the agent of the administration in that they were expected to oversee all regulations and report any irregularities to the district officer. They did not have magisterial powers but they could arrest wrongdoers and bring them to court. They were also expected to superintend road maintenance and keep the village coconut groves free of pests as well as arrange carriers for government patrols. For these services they were exempted from head tax (TNG Report 1926-27:85). Those luluais who showed greater

capacities were appointed paramount chiefs and it was envisioned that these so-called chiefs would ultimately evolve into a native magistracy (TNG Report 1930-31:95).

However, in the Madang region, the attempt to introduce indirect rule ran into all sorts of difficulties. One of the major problems for the administration was the rivalry which emerged between the government appointees and the mission teachers. After World War I, the Rhenish mission revised its proselytizing methods, and instead of trying to converted the Madangs on a one-to-one basis, sent indigenous evangelists into the villages, where they succeeded in converting entire populations. The mission teachers, as a result, often became men of status who rivalled the government appointees for power in the village. Indeed, the mission teachers had several advantages. They were perceived as having an education, however scant that might be. They had the backing of the mission and were in constant contact with the villagers. And although they were usually outsiders, this fact worked in their favour, since they were perceived as being more impartial than the luluai (Mair 1948:55; Downs papers 1939-40:9). Certainly, it would seem that the villagers did not accept the authority of the luluais since even the most trivial of matters were left to the adjudication of the patrol officers (Downs papers 1938-39:4). Nor was the

selection of a paramount chief a success. Indeed, the numbers of those appointed to this position fluctuated throughout the 1930s, being three in 1931, five in 1933, three in 1937 and five again in 1939. Possibly the large number of languages within the region made it difficult to make appointments which would be acceptable to several villages, but the lack of appointments also reflected the lack of leadership material suited to the requirements of the administration. One patrol officer scathingly wrote that in the area between the Gum and Gogol rivers that, 'There was no native remotely resembling or even fractionally fit for the position' (Downs papers 1938-39:5).

It was not until the late 1930s that the administration began to reassess its political relations with the villagers, especially those who had been in long term contact with Europeans. The whole of the central area of the Madang district was by now considered to be under government control and for the first time treated differently from those areas which had been more recently opened up. The area, containing some 47,482 people, was divided up into sub-divisions which were defined and treated as entire units. An officer was attached to each unit and conferences were held by him and attended by the local officials from that area. Various matters were discussed and the

powe: , and duties of the village officials were explained. For the first time the village officials found themselves working with the administration and not for the administration. The government officers found that the local people, instead of being passive, freely entered into discussions and were quite capable of putting forward suggestions as to the management of the district. Not suprisingly, such an approach helped to boost the prestige of the village officials and their newly acquired authority helped to create greater effiency within the district, with patrol officers needing to do less adjudication of trivial matters (TNG Report 1939-40:27). Unfortunately, this newly found confidence in the local people came in 1940, which was too late for them to be able to practice genuine political participation in the administration of their area.

Whilst it can be argued that the imposition of a head tax, the encouragement of indentured labour and the introduction of the various government regulations played no small part in the breaking down of village life, the government anthropologist, E.W.P. Chinnery, claimed that it was the missionaries, rather than the administration, who had a far greater impact on the lives of the villagers (TNG Report 1932-33:158). Indeed, his claim was particularly true of the Madang region for two reasons. First, the missions were able to establish close working relations with the Madang

people in their villages, whilst lack of money prevented the administration from doing little other than mounting annual patrols. Second, in Madang, the rivalry which existed between the two churches, Lutheran and Catholic, spurred each to move into the more remote areas to claim souls before the other arrived. Not only did this sometimes bitter rivalry create confusion among the people of the Madang district, but it also annoyed the administration, which saw the push by the missions into the uncontrolled areas as undermining the influence of the government.

When Australia assumed control of the mandate, the missionaries in the District were predominantly German. In 1926, the German Property Ordinance extinguished title to all missions held by Germans and invested title back to the particular faith of the mission whose property was involved (TNG Report 1925-26:33). Since the Holy Spirit Mission was Dutch-based, it experienced little upheaval and its clergy remained predominantly German and Dutch. The German Rhenish missionaries, however, were replaced as early as 1922 by Americans, who were usually the offspring of German migrants and, by 1932, they assumed full control (TNG Report 1932-33:144). Not only did the personnel of the mission change, but so too, did its financial status. Unable to obtain support from Germany during World War I, both missions were forced to expand their plantation operations to

become self-sufficient. Moreover, with the takeover by the Americans, the Lutheran mission now had access to 'the fox-furred forums that so generously distribute largesse on behalf of the Associated Women's Clubs of America', as one employee of the comparatively impoverished Australian administration bitterly pointed out (Downs papers 1938-39:9).

Not only did the Lutheran mission benefit from a change in its financial fortune, its conversion rates also increased rapidly with its changes in proselytizing style. In 1919, the first indigenous evangelists were sponsored by their Morobe congregation to work in the Amele area. Most could not read or write, but they had learnt Bible stories, verses from the scriptures, hymns and prayers. The native teachers were able to convert whole villages into Christian congregations. In 1925, some of these converts began to move into the Trans-Gogol region and by 1930, the Lutherans claimed some spectacular results, with 40,000 adherents in the district (TNG Report 1930-31:103). In 1934, conversions began in the Bagasin Basin area (De'Ath 1981b:73). The Lutheran church also began to encourage indigenous congregations to organize missionary activity in uncontrolled areas. The cost of the work undertaken by the Lutheran Mission in the Bunabun hinterland and the issue of how this could best be achieved was discussed by the elders of Karkar and Bagabag islands, who decided to sponsor the education

of young boys from the Bunabun area by bringing them to the missions on Karkar and Bagabag (Downs papers 1938-39:9). However, Chinnery was right and the influx of native teachers began to affect village customs. In a report of the Madang district marriage customs and language Patrol Officer Bloxham made the observation that customs were dying out because:

> every village in the area had a native teacher established and the younger men are no longer following the original custom in its entirety...the missionary insists on the abolition of polygamy and this is creating a social problem, as the man with two wives had to get rid of the second wife before he can become a Christian. As this second wife had been obtained by the outlay of wealth the native regards this divorce as a waste of money (P.O.Bloxham, Madang District Patrol Report, No.8 1932-33).

Nor were the SVDs slow in taking up the Lutheran challenge; the district thus became a centre of theological rivalry. Because the Lutherans had moved into Siar and Kranget and the Catholics into Alexishafen, the Nobanob area became split by the two religions. In some village, like Riwo, both religions

were represented and the village supported two rival churches with rival congregations. In the 1930s the rivalry continued in the north-west region of the district, where the Catholics tried to expand their operations from Bogia, through Josephstaal and along the Ramu side of the Adelbert Mountains, while the Lutherans tried to penetrate the area inland from the coast at Bunabun (Downs papers 1938-39). Along the Rai coast and the Upper Ramu valley the Lutherans held sway, although the Catholics were able to establish a mission post in the immediate vicinity of Saidor (Lawrence 1964:86).

The rivalry between the mission continued unabated, exasperating the administration, partly because the Australian administration distrusted foreigners and partly because it saw the actions of the missions as undermining the civilizing of the local people, which was the role which the government had assumed for itself. One incident sums up the three way conflict succinctly. In the 1930s a Dutch SVD priest was arrested in the Ramu area near the Trans-Gogol on a charge of having burnt the house of two Lutheran Mission helpers who had encroached on his territory. The response of the local magistrate to this action was to sentence the Dutch missionary to five years hard labour. The sentence was later reduced on appeal (De'ath 1981b:67).

For the most part, however, it was the Lutheran

native mission teachers whom the administration saw as the major disruption to their expansion into the remoter areas. It was maintained that the indigenous teachers followed a pattern of behaviour which conflicted with the establishment of good government. For the first two years they were, according to Patrol Officer Downs, generally religious fanatics; this period was followed by another of indifference to religion, but because of the status they had acquired as mission teachers they were able to channel their energies into village politics and so weaken the power of the administration-appointed village officials (Downs papers 1939-40:9). Moreover, it was found that the actions of the mission teacher who had moved into the uncontrolled areas undermined the position of the administration before it had even moved into the area. In the Magela area of the Adelbert Mountains the mission teachers had variously told the villagers that the kiap (government officer) would come and frighten them into submission. Others said that the villagers should prepare a road and rest hut in anticipation of his imminent arrival, although the kiap, knowing nothing of such plans, did not come. These actions created future resentment among those villagers involved which was difficult for the administration to repair (Downs papers 1938-39:8).

The ideas of the mission teachers did not always coincide with those of the European missionaries

either. This was especially true after the outbreak of the Second World War when village mission teachers began to spread propaganda which suggested either the imminent departure of all Europeans, save for the missions, or foretold of the impending return of the Germans, who would create a perfect state (Downs papers 1939-40:9). Such actions only confirmed to the Administration the view which it had held for some time, that although the American missionaries were nice enough people, they lacked the organizational ability of their German counterparts and thus were unable to maintain control over their mission helpers (Downs papers 1938-39:5).

The administration saw the periodic disturbances which occurred in the Adelbert Mountains as being the result of mission rivalry in that area. The anxiety of the mission teachers to push into that area ahead of the Catholics created a lot of tension, not just between the Lutheran mission and the administration, but also between villages. Some villagers objected to any missionary activity in their areas and would attack converted villages. This could occur even when the two villages had been traditionally on friendly terms (Downs papers 1938-39:11). Other villagers thought that the mission helpers who penetrated their area were connected with labour recruiters and objected to their presence (Downs Papers April, 1939:1).

Moreover, when the missionaries got into trouble,

even in the more remote areas, the administration was expected to go in and rescue them, stretching already strained resources and goodwill. In August 1936, a missionary party on patrol was attacked in an area southwest of Bunabun village. The party had been ill-prepared for the patrol: it lacked reliable interpreters, the mission helpers were discourteous to the villagers and the largesse distributed by the missionaries was seen by the villagers as a sign of weakness. One of the European missionaries was slightly hurt in the attack, which was reported to the district officer by a village messenger. The district officer sent up a plane to look for the missionaries, but the attempt proved to be futile since the missionaries had walked out of the area themselves and had gone to Karkar island for medical treatment before turning up in Madang Town a week later. The district officer was furious at the waste of time and the money which had been spent on what was no more than a storm in a teacup, and asked the administrator to have the area declared uncontrolled as a lesson to the Lutherans and prevent their entering the area again (D.O. Oakley, memorandum to Director of District Services and Native Affairs, 31.8.38). Sir Walter McNicol was sympathetic, but declined the request, possibly because such actions would have been hard to explain in the League of Nations (memorandum to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, 5.5.39). But the administration

was again forced to intervene in the same area when a group of villagers enlisted the help of their traditional friends to drive out a group of missionary helpers. In the skirmish, the wife of one of the mission helpers was badly wounded and again administration was forced to intervene (A.D.O. Kyle, Patrol Report, March 1939).

While the administration frequently resented mission activity and individual officers appeared almost hostile to the presence of missionaries, especially in the less controlled regions, they were not above exploiting them for the benefit of the government. It was even thought that the competition between the two churches could be used to speed up the building of roads, especially in the west of the district where the competition was fiercest. Moreover, it was recognized that the good auspices of the missionaries was necessary if labour recruitment in more remote areas was to be successful (Downs papers August 1939:4).

Some missionaries, however, argued that rather than missionary activity, it was government patrols which caused the most disruption to village life. Certainly the native police had acquired a reputation for brutality and although there had been moves to improve standards they remained poor, leading one Catholic missionary to claim that:

> At night, or even during the day, while the

> European patrol officer is resting, his native boys, taking advantage of the opportunity, interfere with the women of the primitive natives or rob their gardens. Disturbances are naturally the result. Then arms are put into motion to shoot down the primitive people; in this manner countless lives are lost, as everyone knows; in fact, on the word of numerous government officials with whom I have discussed native police boys, they have been the cause of untold trouble in uncontrolled areas. (De'Ath 1981b:67).

Actually, there were very few reports of disturbances by New Guineans in the Madang district during the period of the mandate, reflecting both the friendlier approach of the administration and the lack of finances which restricted the number of patrols into the newer areas; nevertheless, the most infamous attack against an Australian patrol in the Madang region occurred in circumstances such as those described by the missionary.

In July 1936, A.D.O. Nurton was attacked on the Rai coast, beside the Mot River. In the attack one policeman was killed, four villagers were injured and two rifles were stolen. Nurton established that the cause of the raid was the theft of a pig by the police and the rape one of the village women. Resentment smouldered along the coast and the patrol found the

area difficult to cover, not simply because of the rugged terrain, but also because traps of sharpened bamboo spikes had been set along the paths. Nurton made himself a suit of armour, Ned Kelly style, and built a barricade for the patrol at Saing. Nevertheless, in spite of these precautions, in late September, Nurton was badly wounded by a group of villagers. They had approached him, asking for peace. Nurton told them to put their bows and arrows aside, but when the women got close to him, they drew bush knives from their bilums and attacked him. Six people were killed in the skirmish. Although Nurton was badly wounded, he was able to make his way back to Madang, where his leg had to be amputated (E.W.P. Chinnery to Administrator, 9.10.36; A.D.O. Nurton, Report in Rabaul Times, 23.10.36). This dramatic incident, which was widely reported in the Australian press, was, however, an isolated one. Generally patrols into the uncontrolled areas were handled with sensitivity; the administration was far more interested in making friends with the people of the mountainous regions, and the punitive approach which had characterized the settlement of the coastal region was absent.

Whatever arguments can be presented on the comparative effects of the administration and the missions on on village life, when it came to the field of education there was no contest, for the administration played virtually no role at all. Indeed, it can be

argued that although all New Guineans were treated poorly by the administration in terms of education, since so little was spent on it, in spite of the institution of an education tax, the people of the Madang district were treated most poorly of all. Madang did not acquire a government school until 1941, although four had already been established in New Britain, one in Kavieng and one had even opened in the new area of Chimbu before the people in the Madang district had access to an administrative school (Lawrence 1964:48). Moreover, the people from the district did not feature in the enrolments of these other schools, although people from outside the school area did. For example, in 1928, there were thirty five people from Manus enrolled in the elementary school in Rabaul, as well as seventeen from Morobe and eight from the Sepik, while there was only one person enrolled from Madang. Yet the Madangs were fully aware of the benefits of education, for in 1941 a group demanded a school and were told that a teacher would be supplied if the group built a European school. This they achieved in less than four weeks and they were given a European teacher. The school operated for less than a year (Mair 1948:171).

Thus it was that the missions were left to provide education to the people of Madang. By 1925 the SVDs were educating some 2,656 people, while the Lutherans were educating 2,815 (TNG Report 1924-25:36), and by

1936 the two had 204 and 119 village schools respectively (TNG Report 1934-35:95). Moreover, this was achieved without the cooperation of the administration, partly because the administration thought that the lack of the use of English in the mission schools would be an impediment to further technical education and partly because the missions saw government subsidies as a threat to their independence (Radi 1971:106). However, the mission schools provided only limited schooling for the Madangs.

When the Rhenish missionaries had first arrived in Madang in the previous century, they had learnt the local Graged language, which they proceeded to teach to other people in the district. After the First World War, the vernacular was used in most villages, although the Lutherans used the Amele language in the Bagasin area and Kate was introduced onto the Rai coast (Lawrence 1964:55). Tokpisin in the classroom was avoided. Only the Bible and catechisms were produced in the vernacular and in most of the Lutheran mission schools in the district, books continued to be printed in Graged (De'Ath 1981b:75).

The implication of this educational approach was obvious. Villagers were expected to become literate in a second language, which itself was used in a restricted area. It was a system designed to ensure Madang educational insularity. Nor was the quality of the education provided by the Lutherans very high.

While the Lutherans might have claimed to have had 122 schools in 1935, 119 of these were village schools staffed by native teachers, whose literacy was such that they could only impart the most rudimentary knowledge of the written word. The other Lutheran schools were a secondary school and a technical school, to which the abler boys from the village schools were sent (Lawrence 1964:55).

The SVDs had even more village schools than the Lutherans, and they had more European teachers. For example, in 1925, they had Europeans controlling twenty three schools, while the Lutherans had only three. Moreover, the SVDs had several elementary schools, as well as two training schools and a technical school. The range of subjects taught by the SVDs emphasised their practical approach to education, an approach which met with the approval of the Australian administration as it had done with the Germans (TNG Report 1927-28:79). Subjects included boat building, printing, cooking, washing and sewing as well as the three Rs (TNG Report 1926-27:39). However, teaching was done in tokpisin because most of the teachers, both European and native, had limited English and their use of tokpisin as a form of communication was condemned by the administration as being clumsy and inexpressive (TNG Report 1921-22).

Thus the administration abrogated its responsibility for education in the Madang district and expected the missionaries to fill the vacuum. However,

the efforts of the missionaries were less than satisfactory because the type and quality of the education which they provided meant that they frequently produced confusion rather than enlightenment.

The war in the Pacific brought the temporary retreat of the Australian administration. On paper, the administration looked as though it had been successful. It had extended its influence into the hinterland of the Madang region. Administration posts had been set up at Saidor and Bogia, and if the people of the hinterland could still be aggressive, then the coastal people were obedient and submissive. However, it left behind a disappointing legacy of lost opportunities. While it is true that the development of the Madang district was hampered by lack of finance and that other districts, especially New Britain and Morobe, outperformed Madang economically, it is also true that the administration lacked both the will and the vision to do more with the local people than to issue instructions. The locals were virtually excluded from economic development except as labourers. Nor was there much effort to encourage leadership and political cooperation. Those whom the administration chose to call leaders were little more than go-betweens. Even those Madangs who had been in contact with the Europeans for more than fifty years were not encouraged to accept political responsibility. And yet the

missions were able to find leaders and encourage the development of village participation in its enterprises, although not always with satisfactory results, since those leaders the missions used were frequently unskilled and uneducated. Thus, the Madangs were caught between a paternalistic and authoritarian administration, which suppressed local participation in the development of the colony, and the missions, which, while encouraging local participation in their churches, also produced confusion.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE RISE OF THE CARGO CULTS

In 1940, the administration in Madang was disturbed by an outbreak of cargo cult activity, known as the Letup singsing, in the Sek-Nobanob area, among people who were assumed to have had the longest exposure to European civilization. The administration was puzzled by such a development among comparatively advanced people and it could only vaguely assume that the activity was a transitional stage in cultural change (TNG Report 1939-40:28-29). However, the Letup singsing was more significant than the administration realized, for it typified the mutual misunderstanding which existed in the Madang region, even after fifty years of colonization. In short, it would seem that the Madangs, while affected by the many far-reaching social, economic and technological changes which had taken place, particularly along the central coastal region of the area, had not altered the intellectual basis of their society. Indeed, rather than rejecting the values of their own society in favour of a seemingly more advanced one, they continually altered their own myths and legends to accommodate the changes presented by the colonizers. Furthermore, if the Letup singsing was the re-affirmation of the beliefs of the people of the Madang region, then the reaction of the

administration to this event indicated the extent of the Australian ignorance of the Madang society and culture.

Certainly, it can be said that the colonizers possessed no great understanding of Madang ideas, beliefs and social structure. Government was imposed from the top, with little concept of its impact on Madang society. Thus it was hardly surprising that successive administrations were unable to induce those men with status and prestige to become allies. Although it was realized that the villagers avoided nominating their real leaders for appointment as luluais, little was done to ameliorate the situation until 1940, when the institution of native councils may have improved the status of the luluais and tultuls. Of course, the Lutheran Mission realized that its helpers were most effective and had greater authority when they were able to escape the claims of kinship and this, together with the mission helper's claim of a religious base for his authority, made him far more influential than the luluai, but this was hardly a solution the administration could follow.

Because of its inability to appoint suitable luluais, the administration was even less likely to be able to develop a system of senior leadership or paramount chiefs, which it had envisioned would emerge. It can, of course, be argued that such a concept would have been difficult anyway since the

influence of the headman, which relied upon consensus, declined with his distance from his base; but since other areas, such as Morobe and New Britain, produced many more paramount chiefs than did the Madang district, it may well be that other factors militated againgst such appointments in the Madang area. Indeed, it is possible that village groups in Madang pursued exclusivity to such an extent that it was difficult for a single leader to emerge.

While it has been assumed that the great linguistic diversity in Papua New Guinea owed its origins to the difficult terrain of the country, this can hardly be so in Madang, which contains one of the highest multiplicities of languages in the entire country. On Karkar Island, for example, where there are two distinct languages, Takia and Waskia. While it is true that one of these languages is of Austronesian origin, and the other is not, the languages have remained distinctly separate, although there is no geographical impediment to their merging. Clearly the people on Karkar want to retain their linguistic differentiation. Nor can it be argued that the people of the Madang area developed different languages because they were isolated from each other. Indeed, in pre-colonial times, many in the region knew each other well through their trade contacts. Not only did the Bilbil people trade their pots towards the east as far as the Morobe area in their large trading canoes, but

on the northwest coast there were also well established trading networks between the people of Karkar, Malala, Bogia, Sarang and the immediate hinterland which were conducted through family members or individual friends (Dagil 1975:62). Because there was no geographical or social impediment to induce such a diversity of languages, the inference can be drawn that the Madangs developed these languages because they wanted to remain exclusive from each other (Laycock 1982:35). It is therefore unlikely that the various groups would have accepted the imposition of a leader whose language proclaimed him to be an outsider. So it was not surprising that while the administration continued to be ignorant of the Madangs relations with each other, their attempts to impose such leadership remained unsuccessful.

While it was assumed by both the church and the administration that they were bringing profound changes to the Madang way of life, in fact, the Madang people were interested only in the material changes which were introduced by these institutions and saw no need at all to reject their traditional ideas and values. Indeed, as the missionary Hannemann observed, the Madangs thought that 'nativization was as good as westernization' (Hannemann n.d.:45). Certainly the Madangs realized that the Europeans had vast wealth in which they certainly wanted to share, but they did not understand its source. That this was so is hardly

surprising since neither the Australian nor the German administration attempted to involve the people of the Madang area in the colonial structure, save as vessels for administrative orders; it was thus difficult for the Madang people to learn how European society was organized. Nor did the indenture system supply any answers. Three years labouring on a copra plantation was unlikely to enlighten the Madangs about the intricacies of European economics. Indeed, it created confusion, for while the wealth of the planter was clearly visible to the labourer, even after three years of contact its source remained a mystery. Therefore, the Madang people could only explain the source of European goods in Melanesian terms. This lead to frustration which manifested itself in a variety of ways. the most notable of which was the emergence of movements which were termed cargo cults.

From Saidor to Bogia, on Manam and Karkar islands, anthropological studies indicate that there was a basic belief that the origins of the material world came from non-material sources. For the people of the district, the knowledge of their environment came from the deities, who revealed their knowledge if the correct ritual were performed. Thus true knowledge for the Madangs was not the knowledge of secular skills, but the knowledge of the correct words and rituals (Lawrence 1964:31). The skill of the spear maker lay not with his handiwork, but with his performance of the

correct ritual which would ensure the spear's accuracy. Such laws relating to the deities were revealed in dreams and only those men who knew how to tap into these laws could be considered for leadership (Lawrence 1988:8).

The coming of the Europeans, therefore, posed a major problem for the Madangs as the Europeans refused to share the rituals which would reveal the secret of their wealth. The Madang people had no other recourse than to seek an explanation through their own myths and dreams; as circumstances changed but access to European goods still failed to materialize, the myths, like Procrustes' guests, were made to adjust. The new myths were frequently accompanied by changes in the attitude of the Madangs to the Europeans.

Peter Lawrence traced the changes in the Madang myths in his book Road Belong Cargo. His studies clearly showed the flexibility and resilience of the Madang intellect. In the original legend which existed in the area around Astrolabe Bay, there were two brothers, Kilibob, the good one, and Manup, the bad one. The former sailed around Madang establishing the languages and distributing material goods. The appearance of Nicholi Miklouho-Maclay was interpreted by these Madangs as being the return of Kilibob, since the anthropologist distributed largesse among them. The initial response towards the Germans was similarly one of friendship, but by 1900 the Madangs could hardly

associate the exploitative Germans with the benign re-appearance of Kilibob and so the myth was modified to explain the German reluctance to share their wealth. The modified myth related how Kilibob had sailed along the Madang coast in a steamer, offering the villagers a choice between bows, arrows and canoes or guns and dingies. The foolish Madang ancestors had selected the former goods, leaving the better materials for the Europeans. Kilibob would now return with a cargo of rifles and expel the Germans (Lawrence 1964:60).

It is evident that the Madang people assumed that they had always had the right of access to the cargo and that they were only prevented from having it by the stupidity of their ancestors. Hence, when it became clear that the Germans were not going to share the secret of their cargo, the Madangs began to search for the right ritual to untap the source for themselves, using a variety of techniques to manipulate the deities into revealing their knowledge. As early as 1904 the Rhenish mission reported that there was a:

> ...so-called secret cult called 'Afa' in Bogadjim, 'Mesiab' in Siar and Ragatta and 'Ai' in Bongu. This secret vice, in conjunction with magic and belief in ghosts, hold the people in a vice (German New Guinea Annual Report, 1904-05, Addendum from Rheinische Mission, cited in Rowley 1968:168).

It was in conjunction with this secret cult that the central Madang groups tried to overthrow the German administration in 1904. Even after the failure of the rebellion, the Madangs remained, if not openly hostile, then at least sullen and uncooperative with all the Europeans in the area.

There is little doubt that the expulsion of some Madangs in 1912 was an extremely traumatic event and subsequently the Madangs began to change their attitude towards the colonizers. The Siars, believing that their exile had occurred because they had failed to accept Christianity, converted upon their return from the Rai coast to prevent being exiled again (Lacy 1973:24). Because the new administration had allowed the Siar people to return from exile, other Madangs were willing to be more cooperative with the authorities by working for the Europeans, paying taxes and converting to Christianity (Hannemann n.d.:29-30). It was about this time, too, that the Lutheran missionaries changed their methods of proselytising, so that conversion rates among the Madangs rose rapidly.

Adoption of Christianity by the Madangs, also, appeared to have occurred very largely because it was assumed that the missionaries would now supply the ritual which would restore the lost cargo. Christianity was thus recast as a Madang legend. God had given Adam and Eve cargo and then withdrawn it. But later, when God decided to destroy the world he

gave the cargo to Noah. Unfortunately, Ham lost his cargo, while Shem and Japeth retained theirs. Ham became the ancestor of the Madangs, and Shem and Japeth became the ancestor of Europeans (Lawrence 1964:76)

It was during this period that many Madangs underwent a cultural revolution. This was partly because of the zeal of the missionaries to eradicate all signs of heathenism and partly because the Madangs themselves were eager to appear cooperative with the missionaries in order to acquire the secret for the acquistition of cargo. Thus the meżiab cult was discontinued, and on Kranget Island candidates for baptism were forced to show their sacred objects to women and children before being baptized (Hannemann n.d.:39). Wooden statues were regarded by the missionaries as being idolatrous and the Krangets were made to throw them out, often to be retrieved by the missionaries and sent overseas to museums, the hypocrisy of which did not escape the Krangets (Mennis 1980:61,108). In 1923, the Siars banned dancing because it was thought to be out of harmony with God (Hannemann n.d.:40).

Nevertheless, in spite of this outward show of cooperation, the Madangs changed their ideas little, if at all. Magic continued to be used. Indeed, the Madangs made the most of their contact with indentured people from other areas such as Morobe, the Sepik or Manus Island to acquire more magic rites (Hannemann

n.d.:41). Sometimes, however, the outward changes and inner convictions led to conflicts of interest. The Bilbil, for example, ceased their age-old trading voyages along the north coast of New Guinea about 1935 because they became Christians. They were forbidden, by the Lutheran missionaries, to use the magic rituals associated with sailing, but this meant that the Bilbil no longer felt protected on their journeys and so they were afraid to venture out to sea (Mennis 1982:297).

The missionaries, however, did not reveal their knowledge and the Madang myth was changed again in the 1930s. Now Kilibob was equated with God and Manup with Jesus. Both, it was said, would shortly return with guns to expel the Europeans who had been too selfish to share the cargo ritual (Lawrence 1964:93).

Towards the end of the decade, a series of cult movements began to spring up along the Madang seaboard, motivated by the frustrating failure of the missionaries to reveal the secret of the supply of cargo. It was thought that the missionaries were purposely withholding vital information either by not teaching English to the Madangs, hence the enthusiasm for a government school, or by not revealing those parts of the Bible which contained the relevant knowledge (ibid:90).

Evidence of the cult movements in this period is scarce. Frequently, the movements were secret ones and

the overstretched administration failed to detect them. Even when it did, it was not necessarily interested since these cults were directed against the missionaries and posed no direct threat to the administration. The missionaries were deliberately kept in the dark by the Madangs, although some knowledge of cult activities was obtained by the Lutheran missionaries, Inselmann and Hannemann. Indeed, Hannemann suggested that cult activity appeared along the central coast as early as 1924 (Morauta 1974:36). Another early cult originated on the Rai coast. Originally designed to kill a missionary helper through its magic, an areca nut, wrapped in a bread fruit leaf, was passed from village to village, although its original significance was lost when it moved from the Rai coast. In another new myth, it was said that Elias of the Bible would come and kill adulterers. Some villagers built houses and filled them with provisions to prepare for his arrival. Elias, according to the myth, was taken to Sek, an area associated with Kilibob and disappeared (ibid:38).

In 1937, at the other end of the Madang district, near Bogia, another movement started. It began when a labourer named Mambu, who had been recently repatriated from Rabaul, returned to his village and began to demand that the villagers pay him a head tax, rather than give it to the administration. The SVD

missionaries in the area heard of his actions and made him return the money. Mambu, whose previous attitude to the Church had made him appear a likely candidate for catechist training, now turned implacably against it. He retreated into the hinterland where he began to deliver his message to the nearby villagers. Mambu claimed that their ancestors had been manufacturing cargo for them in the interior of Manam volcano, but the Europeans entrusted with its delivery had taken the cargo for themselves. He declared that the time was coming when the ancestors would rectify the situation and bring ships laden with cargo to a huge harbour which was to be created in front of Mambu's house. When the time was right for the ancestors to act, all gardening must cease and the pigs must be destroyed as a sign of faith in the ancestors' actions, for without such a sign the ancestors would not come. In the meantime, head tax was to be paid to Mambu and the villagers were no longer to work for the administration or go to church or send their children to school. Those villagers who disobeyed would be punished by their ancestors when they returned. Mambu built some small, temple-like, buildings in some of the villages. He carried out a form of baptism and insisted that the villagers wear European clothing, burying their traditional clothes in an elaborate ceremony. Mambu demanded money for his prayers to the ancestors, declared himself to be immune to wounding,

and remained celibate. He referred to himself as King long ol kanaka and liked his followers to call him the Black King (Burridge 1960:182-186).

Both the administration and the mission were alarmed by the results of Mambu's activities. School and church attendance fell. Roadwork declined and collecting head tax became difficult. Mambu was arrested in early 1938 and eventually taken to Madang in chains. The movement, without its leader, was assumed to have collapsed (ibid 1960:186). But, as Burridge himself found, the memory of Mambu remained very strong within the Bogia area. Indeed, the villagers claimed that Mambu knew the secret of the source of cargo and was arrested to prevent his revealing it (ibid 1960:189).

The Letub cult, which may have existed throughout the 1930s in the central Madang region, reached its height after 1937, when it spread from its origins in Sek village, along the coast to Bilbil and into the hinterland behind Alexishafen to Nobanob, thus encompassing areas of both Catholic and Lutheran influence. The people in these areas were convinced that the missionaries had deliberately misled them about the nature of God. In reality, the villagers claimed, both God and Jesus Christ were local deities, whom the missionaries prevented from returning to Madang with the wealth that had been lost by foolish Madang ancestors because the missionaries wanted the wealth to stay with the Europeans. A new ritual was devised which would enable the deities to return. Prayers and hymns were sung. Sacrifices and

invocations were made to the deities and to please the ancestors sufficiently to intercede with the deities on the Madangs' behalf, a special dance, called the Letub dance, was devised. This dance was characterized by shaking and swaying and was the most visible sign of the cult (Lawrence 1964:92-96).

The administration was not inclined to take action against the cults, for they were not considered to be harmful to good government. Indeed, some government officers considered that those mission teachers who championed the German cause were a greater security risk (Downs papers 1939:9). Generally, it assumed that the cults could be controlled if the leaders were arrested and government officers discussed the issue with the villagers (TNG Report 1939-40:27). Even when the tultul of Kauris village, one Kaut, declared that he wanted to become king of Madang, the administration was disinclined to act. However, after repeated complaints from Lutheran missionaries, it eventually had Kaut arrested but let him go the next day when it was clear that he was not a political threat.

The following year, 1941, a cult, known as the Kukuaik cult, began to manifest itself on Karkar Island. Like the Letub and Mambu cults, this cult was the result of reaction to the perceived failure of the missionaries to reveal the secret of access to cargo to the Karkar people. The movement followed similar lines to the others, especially in that the ritual associated

with it appeared to have a connection with Christian rituals. Indeed, the Lutheran missionaries on the island first assumed the cult to be a Christian revival. However, it became evident that the phenomenon was not Christian when the gardens became neglected and labourers failed to turn up at the plantations. This neglect was to show the ancestors that the villagers had faith in their ability to persuade the deities to reveal the secret of cargo. Dancing, chanting and visions became common. Kubai of Boroman village made himself leader of the movement and appointed 'kings' and 'soldiers' to run the villages. Because he believed that the Europeans had sacrificed Jesus in order to learn the secret of the access to cargo, he killed his wife and planned for her reappearance by plane by having an airstrip cleared at his village (McSwain 1977:94).

Because of complaints by missionaries and planters, the administration acted and a police contingent was sent to arrest the leaders, including Kubai. Most of those involved were simply charged with breaking their labour contracts. The Karkars, however, assumed that the action taken by the administration occurred because the villagers were coming close to discovering the secret of the access to cargo. So although the administration effectively stopped the Kukuaik movement by removing its leaders, it did not destroy the ideas which lay behind the movement

(ibid:96).

One of those in the police party was Tagarab of Milguk village in the Amele area. He had worked in Rabaul and had been involved in the general strike of 1929. Some time in the 1930s he joined the police force, eventually serving in Madang. In 1937, he may have started a communal village garden scheme near the Madang township, the produce from which he sold to the local police (Morauta 1974:38). Tagarab was influenced by the Kukuaik cult and was probably influenced by the Letub cult as well and, as a result, he blamed the missionaries for the lack of cargo being delivered to the New Guineans. By mid-1942, the war in the Pacific had reached New Guinea and Madang had been bombed. Tagarab fled the town and returned to his village. In Milguk, he declared that these events were a precursor to the arrival of cargo, which would shortly be brought by the spirits of the dead in the guise of Japanese airman. The villagers were expected to continue with the Lutheran hymns, prayers and other forms of worship, but now they were to use them as the fulfilment of their obligations to the deities rather than the Christian God. Gardens and food production were neglected, for there was no need for them. Because of the confused situation in New Guinea in 1942, Tagarab was able to avoid the Australian authorities, although some of his followers were gaoled, so the cult continued to spread, from the south Nobanob area to parts of the Gogol valley and the

Bagasin area (Lawrence 1964:104).

The war at first by-passed Madang. Rabaul fell in January 1942 but although Madang was bombed from the air, the Japanese did not enter the town until December, when troops moved east from Wewak. The Rai coast region was penetrated after the battle of the Bismarck Sea when the Japanese began to retreat to the west (Allen 1981:14). Reaction to the arrival of the Japanese into the Madang district was varied. Because of the cult activity in the period before the Japanese invasion, some Madangs welcomed their arrival. Others remained loyal to the Europeans, but usually because there were close personal relationships. The majority of Madangs, however, found that they had little, if any, control over a confusing situation and simply tried to survive the experience by taking no sides at all. Tagarab and Kaut were the most prominent collaborators because they believed that their future lay with the Japanese. Kaut tried to manipulate the situation to his own advantage by declaring that the Japanese recognized him as king of Madang. But such a declaration seemed unlikely since the Japanese had little tokpisin. Tagarab kept up his own cult rituals, hoping that the Japanese would get rid of the Europeans and then reveal the secret of access to cargo. When the tide of war turned against the Japanese, Tagarab joined them in their retreat to the Sepik: however, when he protested to the Japanese over their increasingly harsh treatment of villagers,

he was shot (Lawrence 1964:110).

Motives for the acceptance of the Japanese invasion varied. Some saw it as the fulfilment of their prophecies. The inhabitants of Riwo village assumed that the coming of the Japanese would be accompanied by access to cargo, for the paper money which the Japanese had given them had a picture on it which they identified as the place at Alexishafen where Kilibob had brought his boat. It was therefore assumed that the Japanese must be acting as his agent and Kilibob would now return with the original cargo that their ancestors had ignored (Mennis 1980:3). A similar attitude towards the Japanese also existed on Karkar, although not all supported them simply because of cargoist beliefs. Some leaders worked with the Japanese as a way of acquiring wealth and prestige. Others, including Kubai of Boroman, avoided committing themselves to either side until the likely outcome of the war had been decided. A few village leaders remained loyal to the Australians and to their churches. Generally, fear was the greatest determinant of Karkar reaction to the Japanese and, although it appeared that the Japanese leadership on Karkar was tolerant of local customs and religion, the violence of the ordinary soldier ensured that the majority of Karkars obeyed their rule (McSwain 1977:75).

This reaction was generally true, too, of the mainland. On the Rai coast, the Japanese had first

been greeted as friends who would supply the cargo which had been withheld by the Europeans. A Lutheran mission helper even persuaded one village to betray the local coast watchers, Bell and Laws, to the Japanese to facilitate its prompt delivery (Lawrence 1964:108). Initially, too, the Japanese tried to make friends with the local people. In places like Ord village in the south Nobanob area they shared their food with the villagers. Frequently, however, the villagers lived in fear of Japanese actions. Lacking heavy earthmoving equipment, the Japanese used local labour to build airstrips at Alexishafen, Madang town and Bogia (Allen 1981(a):14). They also forced the villagers to make gardens to supplement their reliance on imported food and villagers were used as carriers. Opposition to Japanese demands could result in villagers being shot (Mennis 1981:62). At Amele and Bogia the Japanese forced the local people to watch the execution of American airmen. When the war began to turn against the Japanese, relations between them and the Madangs deteriorated even further. As food supplies declined, the Japanese stole pigs, fowls and other food from the Madangs. Some resorted to cannibalism (Lawrence 1964:110). Others fled into the bush where some made friends with the locals enabling them to stay hidden for years. Nine former Japanese soldiers remained in the Finesterre Ranges until late 1949, when they gave themselves up to Australian authorities (Pacific Islands

Monthly, October 1949:27).

In some areas, village leaders tried to protect their people from violence by cooperating with the Japanese. Kamot, the luluai of Riwo, turned over an American pilot to the Japanese after the latter had learnt of his presence near the village (Mennis 1980:5) but generally the leaders felt as helpless as everyone else. On occasions, remarkable loyalty to the defeated Europeans was shown. In spite of the assumption that the missionaries had failed to share the secret of the access to cargo, when those missionaries who had stayed in Madang were rounded up and put on Kranget Island, they were fed by the locals until they were shipped to the west (Mennis 1980:93). Conversely, in the battle for Shaggy Ridge, it has been suggested that some villagers fought for the Japanese by pretending to be members of the Papuan Infantry Battalion, while the people of the Ramu valley maintained a position consistent with their pre-war attitude and were hostile to everyone, Japanese and Allies alike (Inglis 1969:519).

Probably, however, the general attitude of the people of the Madang district towards the mayhem which surrounded them in the period of the Second World War, can best be summed up by a Tangu from the Bogia area who said:

> You see, we do not understand. We are

> just in the middle. First the Germans came---and the Australians pushed them out. Then the Japanese pushed out the Australians. Later, the Australians and the Americans forced the Japanese to go. It is beyond us. We can do nothing. When a kiap tells us to carry his baggage we had to obey. When a German told us to carry his baggage we had to obey. When a Japanese told us to carry his baggage we had to do it. If we did not we might be killed. All right, there it is...that's life (Burridge 1960:12).

The government anthropologist had noted as early as 1932 that:

> The condition in some parts of New Guinea to-day is that of people who have been abruptly thrown into the melting pot of changing events without adequate assistance to adjust themselves (Chinnery, cited in TNG Report 1932-33:158).

But while the government antropologist might be sympathetic to the plight of the villagers, the administration had neither the funds or the will to provide that assistance which could change the

situation. It is therefore, hardly surprising that there should have been a reaction by the people of the Madang district to the frustrating and bewildering situation in which they found themselves. In the absence of a satisfactory solution to the problem, not even the war in the Pacific could induce the people of the Madang district to give up their belief in the cargo movements.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RISE AND FALL OF YALI

In the immediate post-war period, the Australians found themselves not simply trying to rebuild Madang town and its environs after the destruction of the war in the Pacific, but also trying to combat the cargo cults which continued to flourish throughout the district. In their campaign they enlisted the support of Yali, a Madang war hero. Misunderstandings on both sides, however brought the alliance to grief, with devastating consequences for Yali.

When the Allies returned to Madang in early 1944, they found the town and the surrounding villages had been completely destroyed. Initially, the Madang people were as fearful of the Australians as they had been of the Japanese, and with some justification. The actions of some of the ANGAU (Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit) personnel could be very harsh. The Bilia people were removed from their island to make way for an Allied hospital (Mennis 1980:87). People who were thought to have collaborated with the Japanese were dealt with severely. The Riwo luluai was gaoled for six months for his actions (Mennis 1980:5), as was Kaut, the pro-Japanese cargo leader (Lawrence 1964:110). Even those who had worked with the Australians were not immune to this tyrannical

behaviour for six New Guinean soldiers were gaoled for periods varying from a month to a year for causing trouble in Madang Town, in spite of the fact that they had been fighting with the Allies for more than two years (De'Ath 1982:4). Indeed, many local people fled into the bush to avoid the brutality of the Australians. However, some Madangs found that other Australian soldiers were friendly and quite prepared to share their food with the locals until their gardens revived (Mennis 1980:93), while other Madangs overcame their initial fears to the extent that they were prepared to work for ANGAU (Mennis 1981:64).

In late 1944, a curious incident occurred in the Bagasin area which was to have important ramifications in the administration of post-war Madang. The Bagasin area had been a pro-Japanese region and had remained so, even after the Japanese withdrawal and the Allies did not occupy the area. The luluai of Sekwari village, a former policeman named Kaum, had been the leading local collaborator and when the Japanese left he gathered the people together and held seances and offered prayers to the deities. Gifts of food were left in the cemeteries for the ancestors (Lawrence 1955:9). Kaum them collected the weapons which the Japanese had left behind and organized some fifteen hundred to two thousand people into a camp, which he surrounded with a palisade. Those who did not have Japanese weapons, he equipped with wooden rifles,

which Kaum declared would be replaced with real guns by the deities, after which the Japanese would return and defeat the Allies. In preparation for this event, the people were drilled by him into a small army unit. The end of the rebellion came in November, when a contingent of native police and European soldiers, led by Captain Blood, attacked and defeated Kaum at his fort. Kaum was arrested and sentenced to nine months gaol (Lawrence 1964:112-114).

The actions of Kaum had quasi-Christian overtones; indeed, Kaum called himself Jesus Christ and there were prayer meetings, while the movement had links with the Letub singsing (ibid:113). But the administration could hardly argue that this cargo activity was simply a reaction against the missionaries and ignore its existence, as it had in the pre-war years, because the Bagasin Rebellion, being pro-Japanese, was clearly directed against the Australian administraion. Thus, it was evident that a way had to be found to counteract the movement.

In January 1946, the new civil administration replaced ANGAU and a far more liberal policy towards the people of New Guinea was instituted. This change in direction was not simply attributable to Australia's trustee obligations imposed by the Trustee Council of the United Nations; it also reflected a new awareness among Australians themselves of their role in New Guinea. For while the war had exposed New Guineans to

a different sort of Australian, ordinary soldiers who treated them almost as equals, large numbers of Australians, too, were exposed to New Guineans for the first time. There was a feeling among many Australians that the 'fuzzy wuzzy angels' should be rewarded for their contribution to the war effort and many grand schemes were formulated which were designed to turn the New Guineans into educated people, who could become reasonably paid workers, or producers of cash crops, businessmen and participants in government (Burridge 1960:22).

The town of Madang had to be rebuilt. Much of this was done by importing American quonset huts from Manus Island, which would otherwise have been sold to the Chinese for scrap metal (McCarthy 1963:226). Indeed, there seemed to have been a prodigious waste of residual war materials and the administration had difficulties for many years obtaining equipment for rebuilding. However, of more immediate importance to the administration in Madang were the difficulties posed by the continued outbreaks of cult movements.

In late 1945, another cult started in the Dumpu area led by an ex-Lutheran-mission-teacher called Pales or Paulus, who had been a batman for an Australian officer during the war. He told the villagers that they should pray to God and to the deities for cargo and that they should make offerings to their ancestors in

the cemeteries. He also advocated sexual promiscuity on the grounds that God had previously withheld cargo from the people because they were always quarrelling over adultery. Promiscuity would remove this problem since the people would live in harmony and hence God would supply the cargo. From Dumpu, the movement spread to Bogajim and down the Rai coast to reach Saidor by early 1946 (Lawrence 1955:9).

Although there were now administrative staff in Madang who had served in New Guinea before the war, J.K. McCarthy and Harold Woodman to name two, their knowledge of cargo cults was limited, mainly because they had seen them as a problem for the missions rather than a problem for the administration. Thus, their solution to the disturbances was unimaginative and they reverted to the old colonial idea of trying to find a suitable native leader to disseminate the ideas of the Administration on its behalf. The leader it selected was Yali, who was to become possibly the most nationally famous of all Madangs.

Yali was born in the hinterland of the Rai coast, which he left in 1928, while quite young, to work as an indentured servant in Wau. In 1931 he returned to his village of Sor to become a tultul. He often accompanied government officers on their patrols, including Nurton's ill-fated one of 1936. In 1937, after the death of his wife, Yali joined the police force and was sent to Rabaul. He was stationed in Lae at the

outbreak of war in 1939, where there seems to have been a lot of talk among the police boys that when the Australians were defeated the new masters would reveal the secret of cargo. Late in 1941 Yali was posted to Madang and was part of the party which was sent to Karkar to put down the Kukurak cult. He was then sent to Lae until it was occupied in February 1942; however, instead of deserting, as many of the other native police did, Yali stayed to help evacuate Madang and Rai coast workers to their homes before he joined the coast watchers, serving in Talasea and on the Rai coast. From here he was sent to Port Moresby, promoted to sergeant of police and to Queensland to be trained in jungle warfare. In Queensland he was highly impressed by the Australian way of life, and thought his own was poor by comparison. He was also extremely impressed by the extravagant promises made by members of the Australian Services of the rewards which would be given to New Guineans in return for their war efforts. After his sojourn in Australia, he was returned to coast watching along the Morobe coast until he was again sent south to Queensland for futher training and promotion to sergeant-major (Lawrence 1964:117-124). Yali was then made part of a reconnaissance party which landed in Tanamerah Bay prior to the Allied landing in Hollandia in March 1944. The party was discovered by the Japanese and five of the eleven in the party were killed. Yali,

however, was able to return to the Australian line at Aitape, a journey of one hundred and twenty miles through Japanese held territory. The Australians were highly impressed with Yali's heroic actions to the extent that it was declared that 'Yali can have a place in any party where danger is to be faced and courage and resource are qualifications' (Feldt 1991:373). After his Hollandia adventure, Yali was again sent south to Brisbane and Sydney for another six months. He returned to Madang where he spent a month on leave in his village before being sent to Morobe, serving there until he was demobilized in late 1945 (Lawrence 1964:126).

While he was home on leave, Yali had been dismayed to find that the area was rife with pro-Japanese sentiment. He believed that if this attitude were maintained, the promises which had been made to him in Brisbane regarding the rewards which would be forthcoming for helping Australia during the war would be be denied these villagers. Yali, therefore, told the villagers about his experiences in Brisbane and repeated the extravagant promises which had been made to him there. He said that the Australians were going to reward those people who had fought against the Japanese with good houses, boats, vehicles, clothes and food. Unfortunately, because the area had extensive cargo beliefs, Yali's pronouncements were taken to mean that he had discovered the secret to the access to

cargo (ibid:134). The administration had no idea that Yali's words would be thus interpreted, so when Yali returned to the Rai coast in late 1945, wanting to promote the Australian cause in that region, the District Officer was pleased to allow him to continue thinking that a local voice was needed to counteract the continuing pro-Japanese sentiment in the area (ibid:137). The Catholic mission, however, was initially less enthusiastic about Yali's actions suspecting that they might well be connected to the Letub movement (ibid:138)

When Yali returned to the Rai coast, he began a movement which was to became known as the Rai coast Rehabilitation Scheme. His aim was to build large villages modelled on the neat and tidy towns which he had seen in Queensland. Houses were to be built in straight lines. Latrines were to be dug, streets were to be kept clean and shrubs and flowers were to be planted. Pigs were to be kept in a proper place outside the village.

Yali's initial effort occured at at Sangpat, where he created a model village on the beach. The local Lutheran congregations quickly became involved in his work and the church elders became his secretaries and advisers. Return soldiers were appointed as 'boss boys' whose function was to supervise work in the village (Lawrence 1955:10). The villagers themselves were to maintain personal cleanliness and lead orderly lives,

for Yali claimed that the Australians would not be friendly with them until they had achieved these things (Lawrence 1964:143). So successful did Yali's effort appear, that by late 1946 the administration was pleased with his work. It was thought that because Yali had travelled to Australia and had seen its civilization, he understood the uselessness of cargo cults to achieve material wealth, consequently, his efforts in the Rai coast Rehabilitation Scheme were officially supported (McCarthy 1963:225). Indeed, the Patrol Officer at Saidor thought that 'Yali's word has not been a hinderance in the area and it was good advice which blended very much with the Kiap's way of government' (Pacific Islands Monthly, Sept., 1950:45).

However, the administration's view of Yali was unrealistic. On the surface, Yali appeared to be a clean, well-groomed, loyal war hero. He got on well with Europeans and because he had travelled to Australia it was assumed that Yali understood the ways of the Australians. But there were problems associated with Yali's understanding of the Australian way of life; Peter Lawrence himself confessed that he had originally credited Yali with greater perception than was it was realistic to assume (Lawrence 1964:127). Yali was, after all, uneducated, illiterate and actually had a very shallow understanding of European concepts--which is hardly surprising since he spoke only tokpisin, and so could hardly have asked

probing questions of Australians while he was in their country. Indeed, it would appear that Yali's interpretation of his observations in Australia were heavily reliant on discussion with other other New Guinean soldiers. While it is probably true that at this point Yali did not believe in cargo cultism, he did believe that the war-time propaganda pedalled by the Australians would literally come to pass and that great material rewards would be given to New Guineans. The fact that Yali spoke only in tokpisin to his own people, probably increased the chances of misinterpretation. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Yali's pronouncements as to the coming of a better way of life should be interpreted as cargo doctrine (ibid:127).

Unknown to the administration, stories about Yali quickly circulated along the Rai coast and as far away as Madang Town. It was claimed that Yali was the new Messiah who would arrange for the delivery of cargo. It was even claimed that he had been killed by the Japanese and gone to heaven, where he had been promised cargo (ibid:136). Leaders of the Letub cult visited Yali and showed him the paraphernalia of their cult. Yali was non-committal but by not refuting the cult leaders he further fuelled the rumours about himself. Other cult leaders, predominantly former Lutheran mission teachers from the Rai coast, attached themselves to Yali and persuaded him that there was

little difference between their programmes and his, since they were both trying to improve the villager's standard of living. Whether or not Yali believed the cargo leaders at this stage is open to debate. Indeed in 1955 Lawrence thought that Yali had accepted their ideas, but by 1964 he reassessed his opinion and thought that at the end of 1946 Yali was simply a foolish bystander at the cargo rituals (Lawrence 1955:10; Lawrence 1964:149). Nevertheless, Letub men, Pales of Dumpu and Kaum asserted that Yali was their leader and that their authority derived from him.

Unaware of the close connection Yali had with the cargo leaders of southern Madang, the administration was well pleased with the Rehabilitation Scheme and asked Yali to take his message to the Bogia area, which was still pro-Japanese in outlook. On his way to Bogia, Yali visited Alexishafen where he was interviewed by the acting bishop. He was told that the Catholic Church could only support his programme if Yali advocated monogamy and without this support the Church would actively oppose him (Lawrence 1964:151).

Yali brought his message to Bogia. Ex-soldiers were appointed as boss boys to carry out his work. Monogamy was enforced, often with unfortunate results and there were several instances of suicide. Faced with this misfortune, the administration made Yali revoke his instructions in this regard. Yali resented the poor advice which he had been given by the Church and

from that point he refused to support it and its teachings (ibid:153). In spite of these problems, Yali made a huge impression of the people of the region. The Tangu of the Bogia hinterland thought that Yali was unlike any other man they had ever meet. They were so impressed by his words that they did as Yali suggested and immediately began to combine their small hamlets into larger villages, a move which they had persisently refused to countenance when asked to do so by the administration. They also began to build paths so that they had easier access to the coastal region. Such an abrupt change in thinking is evidence of the power of Yali's charásmatic personality. But it is also clear that the Tangu associated him with the cargo movement (Burridge 1960:137).

Yali's rehabilitation scheme continued apace, but the administration, although still interested in the scheme, failed to liáse closely with Yali and misunderstandings continued to undermine its outcome. For example, the administration had decided that the old luluais and tultuls should be replaced with a village council. When Yali installed his ex-soldiers as boss boys in villages he assumed that they would be replacing the soon-to-become-obsolete village officials. But these appointees were responsible only to Yali and not to the administration. Yali also tried to set up schemes to encourage economic progress in the region, but they tended to be disorganized because they

had no proper support or supervision from the administration and most of them failed ignominiously (Lawrence 1964:157).

In mid-1947, the administration decided that Yali and some other prominent native leaders should be sent to Port Moresby to discuss plans for the long-range development of the country. Yali, however, assumed that the visit had been organized to honour those promises which had been made to him in Brisbane. He thought that his efforts on behalf of the administration, would now see him rewarded by being made a patrol officer, thus gaining equality with the Europeans. Yali also hoped that the journey to Port Moresby would enable him to have the authority of the missions curtailed.

It was hardly surprising that when news of Yali's impending journey became known, it was thought that he was going to Port Moresby to secure cargo (ibid:158). As a result of this assumption, cargo activity rapidly spread throughout many parts of Madang. It moved into the Bagasin area and the Ramu valley, where several ex-soldiers argued that the old village leaders should be replaced by boss boys who would carry out the reconstruction of the villages and ban polygamy. Without these changes, it was alleged, Yali would not give them a share of the cargo. Pales introduced cargo ideas to the Dumpu area, claiming he had been sent there by Yali and the Lutheran church. Kaum began a

new cult just outside Madang town when he foretold of an earthquake which would destroy all the Europeans and herald the arrival of cargo; after this occurred, Kaum claimed, he would become ruler of the Gogol and Bagasin areas while Yali would rule Madang and the Rai coast. He spread these ideas to Saidor when he was transferred there with a government work team (ibid:164).

While all these events were occurring in Madang, Yali's journey to Port Moresby proved to be almost a complete failure for him. From the first it proved to be a disappointment, for instead of being sent to the capital in the manner befitting a person of consequence Yali and his co-travellers were not treated with dignity. The journey was so disorganized that although Yali left Madang on the 12th August he did not arrive in the capital until the 28th September. Here he discussed the development of village councils, education and agriculture with the administration. However, when he raised the issue of the rewards which he had been promised in Brisbane, he was told that those promises were not going to be upheld. He was told that the Australians who had made them had exaggerated and although Australia was prepared to reward the New Guinean war effort by improving health and education services as well as providing war damage compensation, these rewards would be provided gradually and there would be no bulk cargo (ibid:169).

Yali was personally devastated. He later told Peter

Lawrence that 'the white men had lied to us and didn't want to help us. We just wouldn't get anything to get a better life' (Lawrence 1964:170). Further disappointments were in store. The administration had rewarded Yali for his efforts by creating the position of administrative overseer or foreman, with an annual salary of £48 a year and rations, so that he could continue his work against the cargo cults. However, while this position might have put him above other indigenous New Guineans, it still left him inferior to all Europeans in the Territory. This was a humiliating experience for Yali, for he realized that no matter what he did for the administration he would never be accepted by the Australians as an equal.

However, in spite of these disappointments, Yali did manage to curb the power of the missions in his area. The administration encouraged Yali to draw up a set of laws which would define the relationship between the old and the new societies. Issues such as marriage rites, land rights, funeral ceremonies, betrothal customs, drinking, sorcery and village councils were covered. The main purpose of these, as far as Yali was concerned, was to reduce the powers of the missions; this he achieved by stating quite clearly the rights of villager and the limitations of the administration in relation to polygamy and paganism. While it can be argued that Yali's knowledge of tribal custom was not sufficient to draw up laws relating to native

custom without coming into collision with tribal elders and that the 'laws' had no legal basis at all (ibid:173), the laws did enable Yali to begin a pagan revival which had the support of the administration, and the missions were powerless to interfere with it.

The administration was so pleased with their relationship with Yali that they asked him to address the Madang people on his return from Port Moresby and a large function was arranged on Bilia Island so that he could be heard (Pacific Islands Monthly, May, 1950:35). People came from Madang, the Rai coast and the Bagasin area, while the European communty was represented by the leaders of the administration, the church and commerce. In his speech, Yali denounced cargo cults and told the people that the way to buy the goods they wanted was by earning money (Lawrence 1964:184). Yali made a similar speech in Saidor but there he also told those assembled, including the local Lutheran pastor and the Catholic priest, that the Administrator had told Yali that the people had the right to perform their traditional ceremonies and the missions did not have the authority to prevent it (ibid:186).

Back in his own village of Sor, Yali told his people what had really happened in Port Moresby and said that it was clear that the Europeans had lied to them and, in reality, they wanted the New Guineans to remain as villagers. Yali said that they had been tricked by the church into giving up their traditional rites and

accepting Christianity because the missions had no intention of sharing their wealth with the villagers. Yali was finished with the missions, and to prove his point he took two more wives (ibid :188).

In spite of his continued public denunciation of cargo cults, the major cult leaders still tried to attract Yali to their cause. Pales visited Yali but they had a major falling out over the question of promiscuity. Yali also refused to be influenced by Kaum. However, another cargo leader, called Gurek, did begin to have an effect on Yali. Gurek came form Sek and so was involved in the Letub cult. He was able to modify the ideas of this cult to such an extent that he was able to persuade Yali that the cargo secret was the right of every Madang villager and was not reliant on European knowledge. Yali accepted this view and the modified Letub cult was fused with his own traditional cermonies to become a new cult (ibid:195).

Thus Yali became a cult leader. The Rehabilitation Scheme had now become pointless since the Australians had repudiated their war-time promises; hence Yali had to find another way to deliver the material goods he thought the villagers deserved. This time he would acquire them without any recourse to Europeans.

Under Yali's leadership the cult spread quickly through out the Madang area. The Rai coast, Bogia, central Madang, the Bagasin area and the Ramu valley

were all affected (ibid:196). Kaum was now greeted as a friend, while some missionaries were treated with hostility. Not all areas accepted Yali's cult. Biliau and other neighbouring villages to the west of Saidor refused to embrace his ideas because they thought that they would retain greater influence with the administration if they declined. At Amele, the paramount chief, Gulu, exerted considerable influence over several neighbouring villages and because he supported the administration was able to halt the Yali's influence in his immediate vicinity (ibid:201). Kaum attached himself to Yali's rising star, claiming to have equal status, but his own people of the Bagasin area were not impressed with his claims and threatened to report him to the administration if he persisted (ibid:203). On Manam Island there was ambivalence. On the one hand Yali's ideas influenced the islanders, but on the other, they refused to accept any leadership from outside (Burridge 1960:140). Thus, although there were reports of cargoism, it did not develop to the extent that it did in other regions (Pacific Islands Monthly, May, 1950:85). Despite these exceptions, Yali's cargo teachings were widespread, and they occurred virtually without the knowledge of the administration. The villagers were very secretive about their activities and although the missions complained about Yali's teachings, administrative officers had no way of deciding whether they had a

cargo or a pagan basis. Thus Yali was able to continue with his administrative work at Saidor and was allowed to make patrols into the hinterland to spread administration propaganda. But these patrols became increasingly brutal and Yali became very abusive towards pro-mission villagers and mission helpers. Women were ill-treated by other members of the patrol and the patience of the administration began to wear out. While there was no outright violence against Europeans by the cargoists, there was a general feeling of unease among Europeans in the Madang area.

This unease may have reflected the changing times in general rather than the specific actions in Madang. Many Europeans felt that too many changes had occurred too rapidly in New Guinea since the end to the war. Sweeping changes to the labour laws had been made by the Australian Labor Government. External Territories Minister, Eddie Ward's policies had abolished the indenture system in 1947 and the administration now determined the number of villagers who could be employed, rather than the professional recruiter. Both working hours and the length of contracts had been reduced. Furthermore, breaches of contract were no longer be held to be criminal offences but were deemed to be misdemeanours which could be punished only by a fine. Local workers were even entitled to workers compensation (Mair 1948:208)

Such reforms may have impressed the ILO, but most

planters saw them as leading to their ruination. One planter declared in the Pacific Islands Monthly that:

> I am more firmly convinced than ever that you can have no well-controlled and efficient labour service here unless you can find a way of punishing these lads for labour breaches, either through their stomachs or their hides. The new ordinances provision for punishment is fatal to the whole thing (Pacific Islands Monthly, October, 1950:13).

When the disruption of the labour supply in Madang coincided with the new ordinances, it appeared to plantation owners that the decline of their power was truly underway. Believing that Yali was behind the problem, they vehemently complained to the administration and demanded that something be done to do something about his influence (Pacific Islands Monthly, May, 1950:33).

However, it was the missions which brought about his downfall. It is little wonder that Yali had incurred their enmity, since his activities had clearly begun to undermine their authority. The Lutheran mission began to build a case against Yali. Disaffected villagers told of his heavy-handed justice, including one incident in which Yali overstepped his judicial powers by illegally detaining four people.

Yali was also accused inciting the rape of a woman (Lawrence 1964:218). The mission published an article which strongly criticised Yali's activities, accusing him of leading cargo cult activities and destroying the work of the mission. The administration initially backed Yali against these claims, but when the mission was able to provide evidence of the irregular nature of Yali's actions, the administration was forced to arrest him and bring him to trial. It was unfortunate that by the time of his trial those members of the administration who had been his staunchest supporters, such as J.K.MCCarthy and the Saidor District Officer, Prowse, were no longer in Madang, and without their support little was done to try to understand Yali's point of view (J.K MCCarthy in ibid:vii). Indeed, the extremely harsh sentence of six years imprisonment which was imposed on Yali was clearly designed to assure the Europeans in Madang as well as the rest of the country that the time had not yet come when the interests of the villager would outweigh theirs.

As disturbing as the Yali's activities had been for the Europeans in Madang, labelling them part of an anti-white movement (Worsley 1957:255) was to misinterpret the situation. In effect, Yali's activities had been an equivalence movement. Far from wanting to overthrow the Europeans, Yali had wanted to share in their wealth and be accorded equivalent status. But such an ambition was highly likely to fail.

First, the administration, although recognizing his outstanding leadership qualities saw Yali, basically, as a functionary who could spread administrative propaganda. Yali might have been considered a superior native, but that was all he was thought to be. Moreover, because the administration was prepared to use Yali for its own purposes, it failed to inquire too deeply, if at all, into Yali's own beliefs and aspirations. Thus the relations between Yali and the administration were based on a misunderstanding from the beginning. Secondly, while the missions, too, were prepared to use Yali to promote their propaganda, when Yali began to question the attitude of the church towards himself and the beliefs of his people and skillfully to manipulate the administration to support his position, the mission had to muster its forces agoinst him in order to maintain its influence with the Madangs. Thirdly, the powerful plantation owners, who had been made very nervous by labour reforms, saw Yali as a force who would undermine their profits. In the end all three groups were opposed Yali because all three groups felt threatened by a New Guinean who tried to assert himself. In 1950, local leadership still had to be controlled by the colonists.

CHAPTER SIX

CASH CROPPING AND THE RICE FIASCO

It was generally assumed in the 1950s and 1960s that the modernization of colonies and the rise of nationalism would occur as the per capita income of those colonized increased (Howlett 1973:249). The initial stage of this evolution would be achieved by the planting of cash crops which would create a peasant class. This class, unlike the pre-existing self-contained tribal society, could then be incorporated into the wider society. Such a stage, it was assumed, would only be a transitional one; democratic and economic development would occur until a modernized state eventually evolved (ibid:252).

This idea was embraced by the Australian administration and the 1950s saw the beginning of economic and political innovations in the Territory. The production of cash crops was actively encouraged. In Madang, it was assumed that such a policy would also help to undermine the influence of the cargo cults, which, even after the imprisonment of Yali, still posed a major problem for the Administration. It was hoped that economic development would counter the claims of the cargoists by allowing the local people the chance of acquiring the goods they wanted by participating in the

European economic system. However, many of the schemes which were introduced into the Madang district failed because they were too simplistic and uncoordinated and ignored the complexity of New Guinean society; moreover, their goals were at cross purposes with the ambitions of the local people.

A three-part policy was formulated to stimulate indigenous economic development in the Madang region: the production of cash crops, particularly rice would be encouraged; simple cooperatives would be set up to enable people to run their own economic affairs; and roads would be built to allow easier access to markets (Hancock 1955:46).

The administration was very enthusiastic about the development of rice as a cash crop for the north coast. Ever since the arrival of the Europeans, New Guineans had shown a preference for rice; by 1950 the expense of importing it had become quite significant. Thus the idea of developing an indigenous rice industry was appealing. Rice, it was thought, had several advantages for the villagers over the usual indigenous crops; it was more nutritious, had a relatively small bulk, stored well and had a short cooking time. Moreover, not only would rice supplement the local diet, but the surplus could be sold to provide villagers with an income. The advocates of rice as a cash crop produced some extremely optimistic financial projections. It was

estimated that by 1960 135,000 growers in the Madang and Sepik districts would produce an annual yield of 4,000 tons, with as much as 2,300 tons being sold to provide an income for the villagers (ibid:52).

The Madang area, it was thought, was particularly suited to rice growing because it contained the two fertile river flats of the Ramu and the Gogol; however, it was conceded that dry rice growing should be introduced before extensive paddy growing was developed. To this end the agricultural station at Madang experimented with several types of rice before it found four varieties which would be suitable for the area. The seeds from these varieties were distributed among the villagers (ibid:48).

Some of the local people, such as Gulu, the paramount luluai of the Amele region, embraced the venture with enthusiasm. Gulu had been a staunch supporter of the administration for a long time and had cooperated with the Lutheran mission, sending his sons to their training schools (ibid:47). It can be argued that his support for the administration's programme was in his own self interest, since it would enhance his status both with the administration and with his villagers; nevertheless, his position as paramount luluai and his ability to halt the influence of cargoism in his own area indicted that he was already a person of stature within the Amele community, so it is likely that he believed that the

development of rice production in his area would be of genuine benefit to his people. Gulu made sure that the roads from the villages were well maintained so that there would be easy access to the markets of Madang. Of greater significance, however, was the fact that he was able to persuade the Department of Agriculture to provide a power mill to enable the villagers to hull their own rice. To be able to keep proper records of the use of the rice huller, the Department helped the Amele people form a rural progress society. Gulu was made its first president.

Rural progress societies soon became very popular. Administration officers encouraged villagers to begin planting rice and within four years of Gulu acquiring his rice huller, ten more village groups in the district had formed rural progress associations and purchased rice hullers (ibid:48). The administration regarded the rural progress societies as good training ground for the local people who could now be taught to look after their own economic affairs and, in anticipation of further educational and economic progress, the native Economic Development Ordinance was passed in 1952. This ordinance was designed to allow the rural progress societies to be re-organized to form cooperatives which would become 'schools of citizenship' (McAuley 1952:502). Accounting methods were to be kept very simple. With the help of

government officers records were to be made of initial subscriptions, which were usually raised from war compensation payments, while records of the cost of rice production and its transportation to market were also expected to be maintained (Hancock 1955:49).

Initially, some of the societies did very well. By 1954, Amele had acquired, in addition to its huller, a tractor, trailer, disc plough, tiller and seed drill, as well as setting up a trade store. £2,738.18s.8p had been paid out to the producers. In the same year, the Bogia RPS had acquired a diesel engine and a mill, as had the Uligan RPS (ibid :49; Madang Agricultural Station Report 1953-54).

The third part of the administration's economic policy in the Madang district involved the development of the road system. In 1950 a visiting United Nations mission thought that it was impossible to:

> conceive of any permanent or steady progress, economic and social as well as political, if the various centres and the different areas of the Territory are not linked together and if a system of main roads with which local communications could be gradually connected, does not break the isolation of the inland communities, groups and villages (Hancock 1955:46).

This situation was thought to be particularly applicable to Madang as the existing roads had been badly damaged and road building projects were initiated which would facilitate the transportation of rice and other cash crops to market as well as opening up land for European enterprises such as cattle production. The construction of two major roads was made a priority. One road was to follow the north coast as far as Awar near the Ramu River, while the other went inland to Gusap to open up the Gogol and upper Ramu valleys (ibid:50).

Enthusiasm helped to overcome many of the problems associated with road building in the region. Virgin forest had to be cleared. Roads had to be constructed which took into account the high rainfall and the unstable geological nature of the area. Equipment for the projects was poor--there were no bulldozers and only three old trucks were available to build nearly three hundred miles of road; even axes and shovels were in short supply and planters and missionaries had to contribute equipment to the projects. There was no overseeing engineer. However, there was no shortage of labour with usually about two hundred villagers working at any one time on the roads (ibid:50). It was estimated by that by the time the north coast road reached Dylup, about ten thousand people had been employed on its construction (McAlpine, Patrol Report, Madang No. 2,

1954-55). Road construction often incorporated pre-war tracks, as well as using roads which had been built by the Japanese and the Allies. The major problem facing the road builders was their inability to provide effective river crossings. Army pontoons were used and a bailey bridges were salvaged from army dumps in a effort to complete the north coast road, but it was not completed as an all-weather road in either the 1950s or 1960s and most produce in that period still found its way to market by boat rather than by road. Nor was the construction of the Dumpu road satisfactory and the road remained subject to road slippage and landslides.

As the administration found with the road building efforts, when it came to rice growing and rural progress associations, enthusiasm alone was unable to solve the problems which developed. The villagers encountered numerous difficulties, frequently brought about by lack of administrative coordination in implementing the projects. Patrol officers encouraged villagers to grow rice before roads were built to take the rice to market and rice hullers were often many miles from the villages which they were supposed to serve. The Garia, in the Bagasin area, had to carry their rice thirty of forty miles before it could be milled (Lawrence 1953:570).

Literacy, or rather lack of it, also created

problems for the implementation of the administration's economic plans. The war had completely interrupted education in the region and it had not yet been seriously recommenced, so there were not enough literate villagers to keep financial records which the administration considered adequate. Villages had to share expertise and even those few who were literate had seriously limited abilities. Lawrence cited the example of one RPS secretary who only agreed to take on the job if funds did not exceed £100, as he could count no higher. In another instance, three villages, which had hired a mill from the Department of Agriculture for £15, were unable to work out the cost to each village (ibid:570).

Labour also posed a problem for the rice planting projects. In many areas of Madang men still left the villages in large numbers to seek work in towns and on plantations. In Rao village, in the southeast of the region, for example, 303 men were away at work, leaving only 304 men in the village. This was not enough to carry out normal village activities, let alone plant rice and build roads as well (Jensen-Muir, Patrol Report, Madang No.10, 1953-54). Similar figures indicated that this problem was widespread. In the Umum/Fulumu group of villages, to the northwest of the Amele region, 59 percent of able-bodied men were away from their villages in outside

employment (Johnson, Patrol Report, Madang No.8, 1953-54), while in the Garia area, just on 50 percent of men were absent from their villages (Johnson, Patrol Report, Madang No.12, 1954-55). In the Josephstaal/Atemble area, it was found that although only 24.3 per cent of men were away in paid employment, 36.8 per cent were being used for road works (Griffin, Madang Report, Madang No.2, 1953-54). It was thought, by supporters of the scheme, that these labour problems would be overcome as the RPS grew more affluent and could purchase machinery such as tractors, which could do the work of those men who had left the village (Hancock 1955:51). This, it can be argued, was somewhat unrealistic, for the societies needed to grow rice quickly to obtain the machines before the villagers lost interest in the projects and this was very difficult because of the shortage of labour.

Lack of coordination between the administration and missionaries also produced unwanted tensions. When the Lutheran mission installed a rice huller at their mission at Bagasin, it created several serious problems for the villagers in the area. Some villagers had worked for four years for the Amele RPS to earn money for a huller of their own but had not yet acquired one because the Department of Agriculture had thought that the roads to the village were still inadequate. Thus, when the Lutherans moved in with a huller, it was thought that such an

action presented an unfair advantage to those who had been idle. Moreover, the money which had been donated by the villagers and held by the village elders to be used by the Amele RPS for rice hulling was now given to the mission. The mission also received a percentage of the rice hulled to pay for fuel, which meant that no rice was sold outside the area. So much discord was produced by these changes that several of the villages split up (Johnson, Patrol Report Madang No. 7, 1954-55).

However, the main difficulty for the administration in promoting and sustaining interest in the rice growing projects was that their policy was at cross purposes with the aims of the villagers. The administration assumed that the villagers would grow rice so that they could acquire consumer goods, such as laplaps, tinned fish and tools. The Australians also thought that the wealth which accrued from the rice crop surpluses together with the hard work which was needed to plant the rice and build the roads would divert the villagers' interest in cargo cults (De'Ath 1981a:32). The villagers, however, grew rice because they thought that by doing so they would be able to achieve equivalence with the Europeans and have the same wealth and power as the colonizers (Denoon 1981:118). It is, therefore, hardly surprising that a scheme, imposed from the top and based on so many false assumptions on both sides, was doomed to failure.

Patrol officers in the Madang area viewed the establishment of rural progress societies as being in the vanguard of the war against cargo cults and so were continually extolling to the villagers the virtues of growing rice. However, their reports indicate that reactions to the rice growing scheme were mixed; even where there was enthusiasm, the administration officers frequently missed signals which suggested that rice growing had not replaced cargoist thinking, but rather complemented it.

Certainly patrol officers were vigilant in their hunt for overt signs of cargo activity. On the north coast, a villager from Dylup was sent for trial for saying that the Japanese would shortly return and enforce peace between the villages (Worchester, Patrol Report, Madang No.M (sic) 1952-53). However, some officers failed to understand that the absence of overt cargo cult activity did not mean that cargoist thinking did not still exist and their false perceptions frequently led to reports which gave the erroneous impression that attitudes were radically changing throughout the region. One officer noted that in Kambu, a village in the Josephstaal area, earlier manifestations of cargo cult activity were no longer evident and efforts had been made to cultivate rice (Griffin, Patrol Report, Madang No.2, 1953-54). Another officer noted that in the Bagasin area there was enthusiasm about road building and rice growing

and no evidence of cargo ritual even in that former stronghold (Neal, Patrol Report, Madang No.16, 1952-53). In the north coast area around Rempi, a patrol officer reported that there was now general enthusiasm for rice growing and noted that:

> when it is remembered that the area was particularly badly affected by Yali and his teachings the programme is even more to be commended (McAlpine, Patrol Report, Madang, No.2, 1954-55).

Other officers were not so sanguine about the rapid decline in cargoist beliefs. At Urugina, for example, it was presumed by the villagers that when the road had been completed cargo would be sent to them by the administration (McAlpine, Patrol Report, Madang No.6, 1953-54). Near Josephstaal, a cult movement was started by a villager called Tanggugava, who told his people that it had been revealed to him in a dream that if certain rituals--including being kind to pigs, dogs and wives, washing before eating and exchanging rolled cigarettes--were performed, cargo would be sent to them from the Europeans on Manam Island. His cult was taken up by several groups around Josephstaal. After a couple of months, when it was evidently thought by some that the cult would not work, Tanggugava was reported to the police and several cultist were imprisoned. However, the cult had also spread to the west where it was taken

up by the luluai of Gunakoko village. He told his people to plant the barrel of a football pump in the ground, plant flowers and dig holes and cargo would appear through the holes. Variations of this ritual, although without the pump, were performed in neighbouring villages. Like the other cult, it remained a secret from the Australians until it also was revealed by a villager. This time it was the wife of a police constable, who, on returning home saw the rituals and reported them. Police action followed and six were arrested, including four village officials. The local patrol officer, in spite of lecturing the villagers about the benefit of hard work and imprisoning the cult leaders as a deterrent, was pessimistic about any rapid change in the villagers' beliefs and thought that, until

> the native can be made to see and understand the manufacture and origin and method of acquisition of the coveted things of the Europeans, intermittent manifestations of cult activity would continue (Griffin, Patrol Report, Madang No.3, 1955-56)

Rice growing also failed because the schemes conflicted with the traditional village structure and the traditional values of the Madang people. Initially, in some regions, traditional land usage was overturned and communal gardens were set up where

the people could work together for the general progress of the project (Hancock 1955:47). But these changes brought dilemmas to the villagers. The Tangu, for example, found that rice growing led to conflict between the traditional leaders and those men who supported the scheme. The best workers resented having to work in communal gardens for it undermined they own ambitions since they had to give up time that could be used to further their personal political status growing their own produce. The luluais, who may have understood the benefits which could be obtained from growing rice, created difficulties for themselves if they insisted on establishing rice projects in the face of such opposition. If they went to Bogia to ask for help from the administration, they would lose three days work from their own gardens; but if they made the sacrifice and undertook the journey, it would confirm to everyone that they were trying to find a short cut to power and thus would not gain them respect. It was easier and less contentious for everyone to ignore rice growing altogether (Burridge 1971:109).

The traditional socio-economic conditions in the villages certainly militated against the success of the administration's schemes. Rice was frequently grown because the administration told the village to do so even though the villagers might not have understood either the benefits which might accrue

from growing cash crops or the need for long term commitment (Lawrence 1964:269). Research based on the results of experiments at the Madang Agricultural station, suggested that rice growing was, in fact, an impractical and poor alternative to local crops. The rice crop on the agricultural station yielded 2,000 lbs. per square acre, per annum. Sweet potato yielded 25,000 lbs per square acre in three and a half months (Madang Agricultural Station Report, 1953-54). It was, always going to be difficult to persuade villagers to produce an alternate crop which was harder to plant and harvest and had a smaller yield than their traditional crops on the promise that it might accrue them wealth in the future. Generally, the administration was as unrealistic about the revolutionary effects which rice growing was likely to have on the ideas and lifestyle of the villagers as the villagers were about the wealth, power and prestige they would gain from participating in the project.

In various parts of the district, the formation of cooperatives and the production of cash crops other than rice was encouraged by the administration. On Karkar and Manam Islands, copra and cocoa, rather than rice, formed the basis of cash cropping and the subsequent rise of rural progress societies and cooperatives. On these islands, however, the flourishing projects were initiated by

local people rather than being imposed by the administration.

About the same time as Gulu was beginning to mill rice at Amele, the paramount luluai on Karkar, Salum, had been responsible for the purchase of a copra boat. However, when the cooperative officer arrived on the island he enforced its sale because of irregularities in its original purchase; the money from the boat, as well as other village savings, totalling about £40,000 was used to establish nine RPS on the island (McSwain 1977:99). By 1958, modernization on Karkar seemed to be progressing well. Membership of the societies totalled 3,000, two cooperative trade stores had been established, and cocoa bean production had been developed alongside copra (McSwain 1977:103). Yet five years later the cooperatives were in decline.

Romola McSwain suggests that the reasons for the decline were similar to those explaining the failure of cooperatives in other areas; namely, that the local people had unrealistic expectations of the cooperatives, lacked an understanding of the wider economic world and lacked local expertise. The clerks who ran the trade stores often did not understand the idea of profit. Goods were given away to relatives, or acquired on unlimited credit. Lack of education made it difficult for the cooperative directors to evaluate the efficiency of the store

clerks, although efficiency was not always the goal of the directors either. When the chairman of the Maro cooperative tried to replace an inefficient store clerk, he himself was replaced. An efficient clerk, it would seem, undermined the prestige which might accrue to the directors through their largesse with the store's stock (ibid:101).

However, McSwain argues that it was the basic lack of understanding of the wider economic world which was the primary reason for the collapse of support for the cooperatives. The Karkars were convinced that fluctuating or low prices which they could receive for their copra were part of a 'plot' by some power, possibly the Australian administraion, to prevent their societies from achieving success. It was thought that efficient European officers were moved to prevent their revealing the secret of their wealth. Moreover, the initial loss of the copra boat, which the Karkars could not understand, as well as the difficulties in establishing a cooperative copra drier, seemed like further evidence of this 'plot'. Because they were convinced that the people behind the 'plot' were retaining the profits from the cooperatives, the Karkars stopped selling their crops to the cooperatives and began to sell them to the European planters and traders who gave them consistent prices (ibid:102).

Although the cooperatives faded away, cash crops

continued to flourish and some local leaders became successful planters. According to McSwain, one of the attractions of developing native plantations was the fact that the local leaders who traded with the Europeans thought they could achieve social and material equity with them and the development of such an association may well have proved a greater attraction for Karkar leaders than the ~~than~~ ~~the~~ establishment of indigenous and independent cooperatives (ibid:104).

The economic relationship between the European planters and the Karkars was mutually advantageous and, during the 1960s, many of the Karkars used the wealth they gained to acquire symbols of European prestige (ibid:111). The most popular symbol was the establishment of village trade stores. Their rapid proliferation (more than one hundred opened between 1964 and 1968) provided major competition for the cooperative stores. However, despite the growing affluence of some Karkar villagers, most of them still relied on the Europeans on the island to help in the purchase of vehicles or the running of the trade stores, suggesting that the European economy was still beyond the comprehension of most of the islanders (ibid:117).

On Manam Island, the traditional leader, Irakau, had established himself as an entrepreneur. He had set up a plantation of more than 6,000 trees, had

planted twenty acres of rice, and employed some fifty workers (Hancock 1955:51). He appeared enthusiastic about the modernization of his island for soon after he started his enterprises, Irakau organized a meeting of the island leaders and at this meeting he declared that the people of Manam should give up their old customs of sorcery and fighting and embrace the new practices which had been introduced by the Europeans. To re-enforce his words he announced that the sacred objects associated with magic were to be shown to the women in order to break their power (Lutkehaus 1990:304). However, his work practices disturbed European planters and he received no support from them. He could sell his copra at very competitive prices because his overheads were lower than those of his European counterparts, but it appears that he did not supply his workers with rations and by calling on his ties of kinship managed to avoid payment altogether to many of his workers. Because of the irregular nature of his enterprise, no copra boats would take his produce to market and no European would lend him money for expansion, except for the SVD mission, which needed his support to maintain congregation numbers (Burridge 1960:231-232). In spite of the suspicions of the European planters, the administration supported Irakau because it felt that his enterprise was an example to the community and an antidote to Yali's teachings.

Although many villagers continued to grow copra and cocoa, twenty years after Gulu acquired his rice mill from the Department of Agriculture, the mill had been reclaimed by the jungle (Allen 1981:118). The great rice growing scheme had failed, not only because of the problem of overcoming practical difficulties such as the lack of expertise and roads, but, mainly, because the administration and the villagers were working at cross purposes. The administration had wanted to initiate a peasant society and revolutionize New Guinean ideas, but the villagers grew rice to achieve equivalence with the Europeans. Neither aim was feasible in the short term. The traditional village structure and beliefs were too well entrenched to be overturned by such simplistic alternatives as rice growing and cooperatives, while the pace of the rice growing revolution was too slow for the ambitions of the Madang villagers.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE INTRODUCTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The move towards the modernization of the Territory in the post-war period was not just devoted to economic change. The administration also introduced political changes which, it was thought, would develop indigenous leadership. Policy development in these areas, however, was frequently inadequate and local response to it ranged from initial enthusiasm to apathy and bewilderment.

By the early 1950s, the administration was extremely disappointed and frustrated with the general inability of village officials to create progress in their villages. Administration records of the postwar period indicate that the general problems which made the system of appointing luluais and tultuls unsatisfactory at this time, were the same as those which had faced the various administrations since the beginning of colonization. In an effort to resolve these problems, the administration began to introduce local government councils. This new policy was initially greeted with optimism by most Madangs, but, their support waned when the new system did not meet local expectations.

The patrol reports of the immediate post-war period produce clear evidence that the old system of

appointing village officials was deficient in many areas. In the southwest of the Madang district, for example, one patrol officer found that the luluais could not get the people to obey them. However, he could find no one who would be an improvement (McAlpine, Patrol Report, Madang No.6, 1953-54). At the opposite end of the district it was reported that the village officials could only exert their authority when a patrol officer was present (Johnson, Patrol Report, Madang No.12, 1954-55).

In some areas there was even an oversupply of village officials, which led to complete disorganization in the affected villages. In Gagaru village, near Bundi, a population of 970 was served by thirty-three village officials. Most of them were war time 'boss boys', who thought that they could still retain their authority. The administration was partly responsible for the confusion: some of the officials had been appointed when the area was attached to Kundiawa and some had been appointed when the area had returned to the control of the Madang district. None had any idea of their duties and many thought that the office was hereditary, or could be purchased, or could be used in raising bride price (McAlpine, Patrol Report, Madang No.6, 1953-54). Probably no other areas was as chaotic as this and there were actually village officials whose actions met with the approval of the Australian officers. Mangare, from a village in the

north Ramu area, was thought to have good control of his village and was always cooperative with visiting patrols (Griffin, Patrol Report, Madang No.2, 1953-54), while the paramount luluai of Bogadjim had maintained control in his village for twenty years, although his influence had not extended beyond it (Healy, Patrol Report, Madang No.8, 1952-53).

The extension of power beyond the immediate village was a common difficulty for the luluais. When Geni, the luluai of Yandara, in the upper Ramu area, sought to take seven people from a neighbouring village to Madang for trial because their own luluai was absent, the villagers tried to take revenge on him for his actions. They were only prevented from doing so by the timely arrival of a patrol officer (McAlpine, Patrol Report, Madang No.6, 1953-54).

Another problem which the luluais faced, was the insistance by the administration that serious cases should be taken to Madang for judgment. Such a task meant that not only did the luluai lose time in his gardens, but such a judgmental and confrontational action could create conflict within his village. In some areas, when the luluai tried to exert his authority, the villagers packed up and left the village (Worchester, Patrol Report, Madang, no number, 1953-54). However, when a luluai successfully solved village problems by mediation and to the satisfaction of the villagers, the administration grumbled that its

authority was being undermined by such action (Healy, Patrol Report, Madang No.8, 1952-53). In other places, the luluais lacked control because of the changing labour laws. Casual plantation workers could now be employed by planters, but the labourers built their shanty dwellings beside existing villages and the local luluai had no authority over these newcomers (Worchester, Patrol Report No. M (sic), 1952-53).

Nor were the efforts of the administration helpful in empowering village officials. To facilitate better control and make census taking easier, the administration resorted to the pre-war tactic of discouraging people from living in the bush by combining villages and moving them along side roads. This action proved to be no more successful than it had been in earlier times. Not only did the policy impose hardships on the villagers as the people lost their gardens or had to walk long distances to reach them, but there were few gains to be made which offset these losses (ibid). Even when villages were combined, villagers tended to regroup themselves, making it difficult for the luluais to be able to exert authority over everyone in the new villages. Some disgruntled villagers left the new village altogether and returned to the bush (Griffin, Patrol Report, Madang No.2, 1953-54). Although it was acknowledged that some leaders (such as Sang from Serang near Dylup) had influence which extended beyond their villages,

generally few village officials were recognized by the administration as having outstanding leadership qualities (McAlpine, Patrol Report, Madang No. 2, 1954-55).

The administration was so short of conspicuously successful indigenous leadership that when Irakau of Manan Island began his commercial enterprises it was happy to praise his ventures (Hancock 1955:51). However, had it bothered to investigate his actions further, the administration may have been less enthusiastic, for Irakau certainly did not represent the egalitarian ideals which the administration preferred in its political development, but rather was an example of indigenous political elitism. The administration based its assumptions on the fact that Irakau had never been a village official, and thought, therefore, that he had come from the commoner side of Manam society and had achieved commercial success in spite of this handicap (Burridge 1960:231). Burridge, however, claimed that Irakau was, in fact, a Tanepoa, a member of the Manam ruling caste, which was why he was able to exploit so many Manam people and have them work for him for nothing (ibid:236). The administration's false assumption that Irakau could not have been a traditional leader because he had not been a luluai or tultul, indicated that men of status still saw no reason to make themselves available to the administration.

The outstanding exception in the administration's almost futile quest for suitable local leadership was Gulu, the paramount luluai of Amele. He continued to impress administration officers with his ability. In 1953, he had organized fellow village officers to meet each Tuesday to solve small problems and it was thought that because of his work it would be possible to create a genuine village council in Amele along the lines of the ones which had been established on Manus Island and Hanuabada village near Port Moresby (Johnson, Patrol Report, Madang No.8 1953-54).

While the administration was well aware of the deficiencies in the appointment of luluais and tultuls and recognized the need to introduce a form of government which would enable New Guineans to have a greater say in their own affairs rather than just be the recipients of instructions, the decision to begin the new system of village councils at Amele was also clearly designed to combat Yali and his teaching. Gulu, they knew, was a strong supporter of a more rational approach to change and had long been an influential ally of government policy. When the Ambenob Council was formed in September 1956, the action was thus seen as an antidote to the spread of cargoism. The council eventually encompassed some 135 villages with 29 elected councillors representing about 23,000 people (TPNG Report, 1970-71:257).

Local government was extended to Karkar Island in

1958 and it was gradually introduced into other regions in the district in the years leading to independence.

Local Government Councils in the Madang District

Council	Year	No.of Villages	No.of Councillors	Pop
Almani	1965	78	37	8,899
Ambenob	1956	56	30	12,424
Arabaka	1964	102	35	10,371
Astrobale	1966	46	18	5,739
Bundi	1965	30	30	7,601
Iabu	1963	16	15	4,774
Josephstaal	1969	66	18	6,479
Karkar	1963	59	29	17,206
(Amalgamation of Takia and Waskia Councils)				
Madang Town	1971		18	9,827
Rai Coast	1964	121	33	13,500
Simbai	1967	56	29	16,053
Sumgilbar	1961	56	27	7,666
Rao Bieri	1964	43	21	4,745
Usino	1967	87	29	10,823
Yawar	1962	91	41	14,209

(TPNG Reports, 1966-67:274, 1970-71:257).

Initially, there was enthusiasm for the new local councils. In the mid-1960's, when the formation of new councils was at its zenith, there was a very large participation rate by the Madang people in the elections. In the year 1966-67, for example, there were seven council elections and of the 22,503 people eligible to vote in them, some 20,501, or 91 per cent did.

Such a figure compared more than favourably with other districts in the Territory. At the same time, for example, New Britain had a participation rate of only 60 per cent, although more enthusiasm was shown in the East Sepik and Bougainville local elections where there was a participation rate of 83 per cent and 67 per cent respectively (TPNG Report, 1966-67:279). The enthusiasm was probably more evident in the elections for newer councils than it was in the older council areas, where there were already signs that the support for local government was beginning to wane.

On Karkar Island, which was one of the earliest areas of local government in the Territory, Romala McSwain studied the performance of the council and traced its triumphs and difficulties in her book The Past and Future People. According to McSwain, the people of Karkar initially prized the new system of government as being an important step in 'restoring their dignity and social integrity' (McSwain 1977:135). When the first elections for the Tarkia and Waskia councils were held in 1958, there was certainly an overwhelming support for the new system with voter turnout of 93 per cent. Several years later, the Local Government Council Inspection Report was full of praise for the efforts of the Karkar Council, (which was now an amalgamation of the original two, Takia and Waskia). It was reported that the councillors initiated and carried out their village duties. They had effectively

provided school buildings and had sponsored useful village projects such as digging wells and building latrines and community centres. The council had also built roads and maintained road transport (ibid:139). So successful did the council become that, by 1968 it had an income of £59,000 and employed sixty workers, making it one of the wealthiest councils in the Territory (ibid:131).

However, support for the council was on the wane and in the local government elections of 1966, the voter turnout had declined to only 56 per cent. Moreover, the standards of the council were beginning to fall. In 1968, the school facilities were deemed to be poor and truancy was becoming a widespread problem. The villagers began to ignore hygiene standards and there was a shortage of supplies for the first aid post. The council vehicles were in disrepair and much of the road working equipment had broken down (ibid:131).

McSwain concluded that there were three major reasons for the decline in council achievements. First, there was a shortage of skilled workers and it was the unskilled, unsupervised ones who damaged the council vehicles. Secondly, the councillors themselves had many shortcomings. Primarily, they lacked the education to understand the finances which were involved in running a council. Grants, aid and subsidies were beyond their comprehension. Thirdly, there were shortcomings in the local government system

itself. Supervising officers were encouraged to support the initiatives of the councillors, but they were also expected to oppose initiatives if they contravened local government rules. Such a role was an invidious one for the supervisor, and it undermined the authority and confidence of the councillors. Moreover, little training was available to the councillors. There was a training school in Madang, but, according to McSwain, its emphasis was on the pursuit of finances for on-going development rather than on consolidation of that which had already been achieved. The implications of such an approach were that the older a council became, the harder it was to administer (Ibid:133).

It could be argued that the Australian administration's expectations for local government councillor were quite unrealistic. Under the luluai system, a village leader had little chance to do anything other than obey the instructions of the administrations. Now, the administration expected him to make a quantum leap and run a complex system of government which was quite foreign to his traditional village structiure. He was expected to acquire new skills and display new initiatives which would advance the cause of modern government, but, he faced enormous difficulties in his new role. The Papua New Guinea councillor lacked the trained staff and had to undertake much of the work which would have been delegated to council staff in

Australia. Frequently he supported new undertakings to earn the praise of the administration without understanding the financial obligations entailed in the new commitments (ibid:130). The Papua New Guinea councillor was also expected to have the abilities of a traditional 'bigman' and be able to persuade, mediate, disseminate news and organize labour. Moreover, he needed to be able to persuade others to assist in food production because he needed the goods to bestow hospitality which was befitting his position as councillor (ibid:144). It was little wonder that the councillors on Karkar thought that they were hard working leaders (ibid:135). Because some of these councillors recognized the difficulties they were facing, they agreed, after an initial reluctance, to the establishment of a multiracial council on Karkar. The inclusion, in 1967, of two Europeans on the council enabled the village leaders to gain access to European expertise, but this modification undermined the enthusiasm and confidence which the councillors had for the new political system; this was reflected in their opposition to further political development at this time, especially self-government (ibid:151).

It was not only the councillors who found the new system of government less than satisfactory. There was growing disillusion among the Karkar people about local government, which was indicated by a decline in the electoral participation rate. This decline can

perhaps, partly be attributed to specific problems, (the Takia people, for example, found it difficult to maintain interest in local government after the amalgamation of the two original councils, when they found they were too far from council meeting to be able to participate easily), but the major reason for the decline in support was the fact that local government did not live up to the expectations of the Karkar people. Services on the island improved initially with the implementation of local government, but the changes did not match the expectations of the islanders. Local government, they found, was no more able to deliver social or material equivalence with Europeans than cooperatives or cash cropping.

Although the problems varied, all local councils in the Madang district had difficulties in establishing themselves and delivering services to their villagers. In the Amele area, unlike Karkar, there was, initially, a clear demarcation between 'official work', which was connected with the work of the Ambenob council, and the work of the village. Younger men were, therefore, elected to undertake the former work, while the older leaders remained to look after village interests. This attitude irritated the administration, which complained that the councillors were only the 'front men' for the real village leaders. However, Louise Morauta, in her study of the Ambenob council in her book Beyond the Village, believed that this position was only true of

the council in its early days and that it changed as the traditional leaders began to offer themselves for election as a way of reinforcing their village status (Morauta 1974:150)

The Ambenob council, not surprisingly since it was formed as a bulwark against cargoism, was the scene of antagonism between those who supported the administration and the church and those who were followers of Yali. The council was overtly anti-Yali and at the time of Morauta's study thirty of the thirty-seven councillors were Christian. Moreover, its hostile attitude towards Yali was continually reinforced by the administration, with whom it continued to have close ties. The council made it clear that it opposed Yali and that his supporters were not welcome into the area; it even blamed Yali for its own failings (ibid:150).

Thus, while the strength of support for Yali, even twenty years after his fall from grace, remained strong, his supporters were certainly under-represented on the council. Morauta suggested that less than one tenth of the councillors were pro-Yali, although support for him in the district, remained at about 37 per cent. The reason for this disparity was, she thought that the villagers tended to vote for those people whom they thought would do the best job for the village and the best person to achieve development for a village within a council hostile to Yali and his followers was

unlikely to be a cultist. On the other hand, cultists may not have voted in the elections because they saw no point in doing so (ibid:160).

While the cultists may have been under-represented in the council, their attitude to it affected its work. The cultists preferred to solve their own problems without recourse to their councillor, thus undermining the status and effectiveness of their local representative. Moreover, it was the cultists who consistently failed to pay their taxes, causing resentment among those who did and making council funding difficult (ibid:156).

Ambenob council district was not the only district to be hindered by divisions between cultists and non-cultists. But while Ambenob councillors could ignore the pro-Yali members on its council because they were in such a minority, the adjoining council of Astrolabe Bay was predominantly made up of cultists, with the president belonging to one faction and the vice-president belong to the other (Lawrence 1971:181).

On Karkar the formation of a multiracial council can be seen as a response to the difficulties associated with the administration of local government on the island. Although the Karkar councillors had initially rejected the administration's suggestion that they include Europeans on their council, they reversed their decision in 1967 when their own educational inadequacies made the council increasingly difficult to

manage (McSwain 1977:137). Karkar was not the only council to change its composition and by 1967, six of the eleven councils in the district were multiracial (TPNG Report 1966-67:27). While the proliferation of these councils may be seen as a pragmatic response by villagers to the difficulties which they experienced in administering their local government area competently, their actions may also reflect a less pragmatic reaction. Villagers had not acquired any immediate substantial material gains through the implementation of local government and it is therefore probable that some villagers thought that once Europeans were elected to a council they would then be obliged to share the secret of the access to cargo with their fellow councillors and wealth would be instantaneous. Councillors may have also accepted the proposition of multiracial councils because they thought that they would acquire greater status by their closer association with Europeans. Regardless of the reasons for the proliferation of the multiracial councils, however, their very existence was evidence that the original local government policy had been too ambitious and their introduction was a compromise which highlighted the deficiencies of many of the councillors and undermined their confidence to deal with a more complex world.

In the 1950s, many villagers had been prepared to try the administration's new initiatives and as a

result cargo movements appeared to be in decline in some areas. However, the failure of cash cropping, cooperatives and local government to deliver social and material equivalence with Europeans led to the re-emergence of overt cargoist activities in some parts of the district in the 1960s. On Karkar, in 1960, some of the old kukuaik rituals, such as cemetery beautification and prayer and confession meeting began to reappear (McSwain 1977:182). The most bizarre manifestation of cargo ritual, however, occurred in the following year. The Bishop of Alexishafen was invited to Abar, a village which had had a falling out with the church, for reconciliation talks. When he refused to sacrifice a black rooster, a willing black villager was substituted. Lagit, the local luluai slit the throat of another man, who held out his arms in the shape of a cross. The rationale for this action was, that since Christ had died for white men, this black man would die for all black men and thus equality would be achieved (Rowley 1965:175). Other examples of overt cargo rituals were comparatively rare, but, other forms of thinking began to emerge. This thinking began to reveal itself in a variety of ways, such as in the attitude many villagers had towards bisnis and Christianity.

The Lutherans and SVDs had re-established themselves in the Madang district after the war. The Lutheran Church, observing the effect of Yali and his

ability of harness and organize local support, decided that it could devolve its authority to the local people and in 1956 the Evangelical Lutheran Church of New Guinea (ELCONG) was formed, However, in spite of being nationalized, for a long time the hierarchy of the Lutheran church remained predominantly European. It was more difficult for the SVDs to change in the same way because their religion was constrained by far stricter requirements for its clergy, and so both its clergy as well as its hierarchical structure remained expatriate in this period. Both the Lutherans and the SVDs, now found that they had a new problem in that they no longer had a duopoly of proselyting.

Prior to the Second World War, the various missions in New Guinea had more or less remained within certain discrete boundaries; now those boundaries were being challenged. The new competition came from an influx of missionaries who came predominantly from American fundamentalist churches such as Gospel Lighthouse (Four Square Mission) and the Jehovah's Witnesses (De'Ath 1981b:80).

While villagers might have said that they adopted their new religion because they felt abandoned by the older religions (Josephides 1990:59) or because they felt pique towards actions of former clergy (Burridge 1960:234), it seemed that some of the appeal of the new churches was their similarity with the expectations of cargoism. Literal interpretation of the Bible,

millennianism and the intense interest with the genealogy of the patriarchs made the fundamentalist religions an attractive proposition for many villagers (Josephides 1990:64). Moreover, while many Madangs rejected overt cargo rituals because they knew that Europeans would never take part (McSwain 1977:182), the elaborate rituals which some villagers adopted from the fundamentalist churches and which appeared to be akin cargo rituals, were something they could share with Europeans (Josephides 1990:65). True cargoists, however, would reject even fundamentalist churches and retain their pagan traditions.

Another development in this period, was the status and importance which the Madangs gave to bisnis. B.J. Allen, in his study on the East Sepik, came to the conclusion that:

> Bisnis is a broad concept manifested in a number of ways, which include processing crops for sale and investing money in enterprises which it is believed will cause large amounts of money to accrue to the individual. The processes by which money is generated are poorly understood, if understood at all, by many people (Allen 1976:252).

The idea of bisnis was associated with many enterprises which proliferated in Madang in this period--cash cropping, cooperatives and village trade stores--in the belief that being involved with the

right one would provide status and wealth. However, most villagers had little idea of how bisnis really worked and presumed that it was just a matter of pressing the right button to achieve success. While it can be argued that such an attitude is little removed from cargoism, bisnis differs from cargoism in that it rejects traditional methods of acquiring wealth and adopts new methods, even though those new methods are poorly comprehended.

Although the number of local government councils continued to increase in the Madang district until 1973, the interest of the villagers in local government, especially in the older local government areas, declined. This decline manifested itself in various ways, such as the decline in the number of voters in elections, the growth of multiracial councils and the re-emergence of overt cargo rituals. While failure to meet the unrealistic expectations of villagers, was an important factor, blame for the loss of support for local government must be shared by the Australian administration. While it is true that the local government system could not deliver the rapid changes which the villagers expected of it, nevertheless, the infrastructure of the system also failed the villagers. The local government council system was far too complex and it was unreasonable for the administration to expect village leaders to have the level of understanding and expertise necessary to make a success of such a foreign institution. The

introduction of local government did little to increase the understanding of the Madangs in the wider world beyond their village. Therefore, although some Madangs were prepared to forego cargoist beliefs and adopt new strategies in order to acquire material and social equivalence with Europeans, their understanding of the of new ideas remained limited and ill-formed.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS

It was assumed, in post-war New Guinea, that independence would eventually be granted to the Territory at some vague time in the future. Mindful of this, the Australian administration began embarking upon a programme of national political advancement in the 1960s to increase indigenous responsibility. The response to these political changes by the people of the Madang district was to look increasingly towards those with European skills to represent them.

In 1960, the Papua New Guinea Act increased the size of the Legislative Council, which had been formed in 1949. Then in 1963, after a UN delegation led by Sir Hugh Foot had criticised the slowness of the devolution of power to New Guineans, a new act was passed setting up an elected House of Assembly. Elections were called for the middle of 1964. Of the sixty-four members of the new House, ten would be appointed; indigenous New Guineans were expected to form the elected majority (TPNG Report 1968-1969:12).

The Madang district was to be represented by four electorates: a special electorate, which took in both the Sepik and the Madang districts and was only

open to the non-indigenous population; the Madang electorate, which covered the area from Karkar Island to Bundi and incorporated Madang township; the electorate of the Rai coast which extended from the Kabenau River into the western part of the Morobe district; and the electorate of Ramu, which encompassed the western part of the district.

The Madang electorate was won by Suguman Matribri. Suguman was a Karkar with local government council experience, a qualifiction which was common to the majority of the candidates in the first national elections. He had been vice-president of the Waskia council and although he was a Catholic, had worked for many years on Kurum, a Lutheran plantation on Karkar. Suguman owned trade stores on both parts of the island and had attended a meeting of the fifth Legislative Council in Port Moresby. Like Taeosi and Stoi Umot in the Rai Coast electorate, Suguman was encouraged by the local administration officer to run for the Assembly (McSwain 1970:149).

Suguman was run to a close race by another councillor, Bato Bultin. Bato was a subsistence farmer and at the time of the elections was vice-president of the Ambenob Council (ibid:177). What probably secured Sugaman's victory was the fact that he had not only a solid block of support from the people on Karkar, but an extremely high informal

vote (18.3 per cent) was registered in the seat of Madang, which told against Bato (Bettison et.al. 1965:420), for some 3,000 people on the mainland cast their vote for Yali, although he did not stand in the electorate, rather than for Bato (Harding and Lawrence 1971:181). Against all assumptions, Yali's career did not end when he was gaoled in 1950, and he was able to re-establish himself on the Rai coast. When the Rai Coast Council was installed in February of 1964 he became its first president. Doubtless encouraged by this local support, he decided to contest the Rai Coast Open electorate. Unfortunately for Yali, the boundary of the electorate cut him off from many of his supporters around Dumpu, Madang Town and the western end of the Rai coast (Harding 1965:205). Although there were nine candidates for the seat, only two others, beside Yali, were serious contenders: Stoi Umut from the more populous east end of the electorate and Advent Tarosi from the Morobe coastal region of Sio. The missions, the Catholic Church in particular, reacted energetically to Yali's candidature and opposed him strongly, favouring as their candidate the impeccably credentialed Tarosi. Tarosi was a government teacher and a clerical officer with the administration who had received the BEM. for his wartime services and was considered by the administration to be an outstanding natural

leader. However, Yali and Tarosi were competing for the same votes along the coast and Stoi was able to capitalize on this and win the election (ibid:197). While Yali and Tarosi made their opposing views on cargo very clear, Stoi managed to have a foot in each camp. While he supported the Lutheran church, and they supported him, he was not above suggesting that his prowess as a business man was the result of his having discovered the secret to the source of European wealth. Harding was of the opinion that cargoism did no more than reinforce Stoi's victory and that tribal and ethnic factors played a far greater role in determining the outcome of the Rai coast election (ibid:211). However, in spite of the fact that Tarosi was defeated in the western division of the electorate he polled 41 per cent of the vote, compared with Yali's 35 per cent. This suggested that even in Yali's stronghold there was already a move towards finding a man who had the necessary European skills to be an effective representative of the people. In the Special Electorate, Frank Martin from the Sepik defeated John Middleton from Karkar, while in the Ramu electorate John Meanggarum defeated three other candidates (Report of Chief Electoral Officer, 1964:24-25).

The newly elected members of the House of Assembly found that being a national member was a more difficult task than being a councillor and that

traditional politics were not adequate for the new situation. Electoral support was difficult to maintain. Promises made by national politicians were often unrealistic, as were the expectations of their constituents, leaving the latter disillusioned and the former without support. Such was the case with Suguman Matibri. The Karkar people thought that he had not kept them informed on what was happening and that his role as their representative did not meet their expectations. Moreover, they thought that Suguman was undermining the egalitarian Karkar culture by building an ostentatious new house (McSwain 1970:149).

The elections in 1968 saw an expanded House of Assembly. Eighty-one seats were contested, of which fourteen were regional, the rest being open electorates. Madang district now had its own regional electorate and five open electorates. These were: Bogia, along the western coast; Mabuso (Madang, Usino, Bundi) in the central area, stretching from the Madang township as far south as Bundi; Sumkar, which included Karkar and Bagabag islands and the adjacent coast; Rai Coast, from the south of Madang Town to the east of Saidor; and Middle Ramu in the hinterland behind Bogia.

While these new electorates were certainly smaller in area than the previous ones had been, it was, nevertheless, difficult for aspiring

representatives to make themselves known to all their electorate. Some of the difficulties which faced the national candidates at election time could have been alleviated had a strong political party system been built up in the Territory, but, in spite of some attempts to start parties, they were very weak outside the House itself. The failure of such development, it has been argued, and with some justification, was the result of the administration's policies. Luluais were selected to serve the administration rather than the people. Decisions for the national good were made in Canberra, so that there was always a lack of response to local issues. Lack of economic and educational development meant that there were no working, middle or educated classes and those few who were educated were encouraged to join the Public Service, to work for the administration rather than to enter politics. Institutions which might have served as nurseries for political development, such as cooperatives and local government councils were discouraged from participating in elections (Loveday and Wolfers 1976:2). Indeed, local councillors were expected to remain neutral during elections and evidently did in many places (Harding and Lawrence 1971:172). Attempts by local people to form political organizations usually led to accusations of cargo cultism. Moreover, many villagers were

suspicious of political parties, in part because they did not understand what they were and in part because they wished to avoid political conflict and preferred to reach decisions by consensus (ibid:173).

It is, therefore, hardly surprising that when political parties began to make their appearance in the Madang district in the lead-up to the 1968 national elections they were started by Europeans and based upon Australian models. Moreover, their policies were very conservative, which reflected the attitude of most the people in the district, regardless of race and there was little support for the more radical Pangu Parti by either Europeans or indigenous people.

The All People's Party (APP) was formed by Jim McKinnon in July 1967. It was modelled on the Australian Liberal Party and was opposed to immediate self-government. About the same time the Territory Country Party was also formed in Madang. It called for a special committee of Australian and Territorian officials to represent Papua New Guinea in the Australian federal parliament and its political platform was mainly concerned with rural development(Times-Courier n.d.:1). However, by the time of the elections that party had disappeared. The only candidate who claimed an alliance with the Pangu Parti was James Meangarum, who was recontesting the seat of Bogia.

Although political party policies had little effect on the outcome of the elections, the existence of the APP in the Madang district created loose associations between many of the candidates which went some distance in correcting the communication difficulties and presented the Madang electorate with some very clear choices. McKinnon, who was standing for and ultimately won the seat of Middle Ramu, was able to attract the support of three other candidates, Bruce Jephcott in the Regional, John Barang in Bogia and Saramuir Sinamaiba in Mabuso. The other candidates for the regional seat also sought suitable running mates. Jason Garrett, the eventual winner of the Regional electorate, was able to attract Robin Saretofa in Bogia, Walai Toba in Middle Ramu, Angmai Bilas in Mabuso, John Middleton in Sumkar and John Poe in Rai Coast. However, it was the third group which proved to be the most contentious in the election. Edward Whitaker, running in the Regional electorate, teamed up with Bato Bultin, who was running in the Mabuso electorate, Wadau Marun in Sumkar, (Yali's brother-in-law) and Yali on the Rai coast. This last association was one of political opportunism and irresponsibility, for Whitaker, wrongly as it turned out, thought that Yali would be able to deliver a large bloc of cargoist votes from that electorate. This entire group quickly become coupled with the cargo movement.

Each group was organized so that the various members of the team could help each other. This enabled the Regional candidates to tour the open electorate with the open candidate while providing the latter with motorized transport (Harding and Lawrence 1971:184), allowing both candidates to make themselves known to as many people as possible. Notwithstanding this mutual help, the group members tended to act as independents and developed individual polices; but in the end the campaign in the Madang district was hijacked by one central issue: cargo.

Karkar was the area least affected by the cargo issue, partly because, after its brief revival in the early 1960s, the local cargo movement had been discredited, and partly because Yali had never had influence on the island. Suguman Matibri, probably aware of the disappointment of the electorate in his performance, and more interested in his business ventures than in politics, did not run again. When John Middleton, a local planter who had lived on Karkar all of his life, made it known that he was willing to run for the seat, other Karkars were disinclined to oppose him and the Karkar Council unanimously accepted his offer. Middleton also had the support of the Lutheran church and the administration for his candidature, but not all Karkars were happy with the idea and some thought

that a Takia or Waskia would be able to understand the local problems better than a European. However, most thought that Middleton was a better proposition to represent them because as a European, he automatically possessed knowledge which they did not. He could understand the new system. Once the Council decided to back Middleton as the sole representative from the island, his support on Karkar was assured; the councillors used their wide influence to control the votes, for when they were able to achieve consensus among the various clan leaders, the rest of the village would follow (McSwain 1970:152). Indeed, Middleton polled so decisively that counting did not even go to preferences.

While it might be argued that the voters of the Sumkar electorate had regressed politically by replacing a New Guinean with a European, in effect they were in agreement with the electors in the rest of the district. In all the electorates, those who won were perceived to have European skills which, it was thought, were the skills necessary for economic progress. The idea of achieving wealth through cargo cult rituals was rejected at the polls.

At the time of the elections, however, it was assumed, by the administration in particular and Europeans in general, that the cultists were much

more popular and politically powerful than in fact they were. This misconception was due, in part, to the fact that of the cultists' strongholds lay close to Madang Town and their vociferous support of Yali gave a false impression of their numbers. But while there was no cargoist candidate in the Mabuso electorate, of which the township was a part, the Yali supporters frustrated the administration, since they insisted that they would vote for the cargo leader regardless of the electoral rules which the administration had drawn up. The administration consequently had to try to re-educate these voters and explain that, should they continue to support Yali by casting a vote for him even though he was not a candidate for that particular electorate, their votes would be null and void.

In the end the seat was won by Angmai Bilas. Angmai could best be described as a 'new man'. He came from Riwo vilage and had achieved personal success both in his own society and with Europeans. He had been a cooperatives inspector, vice-president of the Ambenob Council (representing his village of Riwo), chairman of the Stevedoring Committee of the Madang Workers' Association and was a member of the Madang District Business Advisory Council. Angmai was a forceful speaker and politically astute (Lawrence and Harding 1971:176). His alliance with Jason Garrett gave him access to Garrett's plane and

a trip to Bundi; as the only Mabuso candidate to visit Bundi, he was able to persuade the Bundi council to support his election.

Running against Angmai was Bato Bultin. Bultin made a mistake in aligning himself with Edward Whitaker because Whitaker's decision to team up with cargoists not only embarrassed Bultin but also cost him votes. While Bultin made it clear that he favoured more orthodox methods of economic progress, the alliance hurt his chances of election because many votes which should have been cast for him were in fact cast for Yali, and thus were invalid, and he lost many other votes because of his perceived connection with the cargoists (ibid :188).

In view of the prevailing opinion that Yali had great support in the Rai Coast, it is perhaps surprising that John Poe was able to defeat him so comfortably, especially in view of the fact that Poe was actually from Papua. Poe was another of the new breed, a man who had acquired European skills and this won him the election. Poe was a former public servant who had worked in Saidor since 1963 and was a member of the Rai Coast council. He spoke Tokpisin, Police Motu and English and had a knowledge of how the administration worked, and he advocated economic progress through the development of cash crops and road building (ibid:179). Yali's platform called for the administration to give what it had promised

during the war, better payments for cash crops and a seat in the Assembly so he could free the cargo dieties. The established forces railed against Yali. As well as the opposing candidates, the Rai Coast Council spoke against him, as did both the Lutheran and Catholic missions, although the Astrolabe Council, which was dominated by cargoists continued to support him. Yali's counterattack was weak. He did not really understand the techniques which were needed in the new representative system of government and assumed he had more support than he had. He tended to preach to those who were already converted and had little appreciation of the electoral boundaries (ibid :181).

The election exercise itself may have been stimulating for the European observers and for those involved, but the low voter turnout indicated that the people of the Madang district did not find politics quite so fascinating. The average turnout for the Madang electorates was 58 per cent, which was below the national average of 63 per cent. The Rai Coast had a turnout of only 35 per cent, although Lawrence disputes this figure (ibid :194; Report of Chief Electoral Officer 1968, pp 41-46). Lawrence put this low turnout down to several factors. He suggested that there was a high percentage of invalid absentee votes. He also thought that many people did not vote at all because they were unable to vote for

Yali, although such an argument did not explain the low turnout in the Rai Coast electorate where Yali was a candidate.

Apathy was also a factor in the low voter turnout. The House of Assembly elections in 1964 had produced few changes and electors rarely saw their representatives. The administration did little to encourage enthusiasm or participation in these new elections and there was little political education. Field officers were not sent to explain what was going on, as they had done in the 1964 elections. Pamphlets were distributed to people who were often illiterate. Councillors were expected to explain to the villagers what was happening, but often did not understand the election processes themselves. Radio broadcasts helped only those with radios, and there were few sets away from the coast. Candidates met with relatively few of their constituents. Few candidates campaigned on foot, preferring to go where plane and truck would take them, thus limiting the villages visited to those near airstrips and roads. Polling booths were scarce, indeed there were only eight inland ones for the whole district. As Lawrence pointed out, with such poor organization the wonder is that over half the people voted at all (ibid:195). When people did manage to vote, many of their votes were declared to be invalid; the voting system was too complex. Preferential voting

required numbered preferences; frequently voters marked their papers with ticks or crosses, thus invalidating their vote, and many thought that preferential voting indicated disloyalty to their first choice (McSwain 1970:152).

Because of the difficulties candidates had in getting around their electorates, they tended to enlist the help of the local councillors to campaign on their behalf. In some places that help was so effective that it almost guaranteed a positive election result. This was certainly true on Karkar, where the councillors not only discouraged anyone else on the island from standing but were able to secure a winning number of votes for their candidate by securing the support of clan leaders. It was also true of the Bundi Council. Once Angmai had gained their support, he was able to leave them to campaign for him. On the Rai Coast the majority of the councillors supported and worked for the election of John Poe. In Ambenob, the Council stood behaind Angmai, which was annoying for Buto, since he ws also a member of that Council. However, as Louise Morauta pointed out, in the areas covering the latter two councils, the prevalence of cargo beliefs, meant that votes were not as easily delivered to the council-favoured candidates as they were in other areas. Indeed, Morauta presented evidence which indicated that cargo cultists distinguished between

local and national elections and voted accordingly. In the local elections, they tended to vote pragmatically for the person who was most likely to deliver benefits to the village, regardless of the beliefs of that candidate on the issue of cargo. In the national elections, however, they were not pragmatic and voted for Yali's platform, ignoring the opinion of their local councillor (Morauta 1974:160). Thus, on Karkar, where the cargo question was not an issue, voting, under the persuasive powers of the councillors was along clan and tribal lines (McSwain 1970:152). In the areas affected by the cargo movement, the impact of the issue was so great that voting cut across traditional lines and villages and clans became divided along ideological lines. However, regardless of the voting patterns, there was a common tendency: the winners were those with the skills which the electors thought could best serve them in a European political environment.

In 1968, in the Madang district, the idea of immediate self-government was not welcomed by most people. Even Yali, who wanted immediate independence as a way of returning to traditional times, was forced to modify his stand when he realized that it was not a popular one (Harding and Lawrence 1971:181). In part, the reason for the objections to immediate self-government had to do with the people's lack of understanding of what was actually meant by

the term. Few understood that actual political control of the Territory was centred in Canberra; to most people the Australian control was more personal and involved government officials and planters. It was assumed that independence would mean the removal of all white people. Thus, while the people on Karkar, for example, ultimately wanted self-government because they thought it would give them equal status with Europeans, they did not want it immediately because it was thought that they needed to learn a lot more from Australian businessmen and have access to more education before they would be prepared for self-government (McSwain 1970:155). Such views were similar to those held by the Ambenob Council and the Rai Coast Council. Moreover, the Karkars also thought that self-government would leave them unprotected and vulnerable to invasion from Indonesia, which was not entirely unreasonable considering the unheavals which were occurring in West Irian at the time. Even as late as 1968, the Karkar councillors told a visiting UN delegation that Australia should not be pushing independence too quickly (ibid :168). And in 1970, when the Select Committee on Constitution Development came to the island it received very little support (ibid:195).

By the time of the next House of Assembly elections in 1972, however, opposition to both

self-government and political parties had modified. The mood of the country had changed, helped by the changing political views in Canberra, and the question was no longer whether there should be self-government, but rather when would the inevitable happen. In Madang, there was little agitation for immediate self-government, especially in the rural areas. This conservative attitude was reflected in the fact that although the general change of mood in the country resulted were only nine Europeans returned to the House of Assembly in the 1972 elections, two of these came from Madang.

The only change to the electoral arrangements in the district was the division of the old electorate of Mabuso into the seats of Usino-Bundi in the south and Madang in the north. However, having two seats, with virtually the same name-- Madang Regional and Madang Open electorate--created an unnecessary confusion in the minds of the electors. Only three sitting members-- John Poe, Angmai Bilas and John Middleton, chose to seek re-election, and all were successful. Bruce Jephcott was able to win the Regional seat when Jason Garrett did not re-contest it. None of the three Regional candidates did a great deal of campainging although Jephcott did far more than his opponents and he was known from his unsuccessful campaign four years before. Jephcott was a member of the People's Progress Party (PPP) and

campaigned along party lines, saying that self-government should only come when the people demanded it; but generally he did not stress his links with the party. One of his opponents was Shong Babob, a Madang who did little campaigning, relying on his record as a well-educated Lutheran and the only Madang running for the Regional seat, to gain victory. However, his qualifications obviously did not impress the Madang voters. The third candidate was Jerry Kaon from Manus. There was little to suggest that his Manus origins acted against his chances and he appears to have failed because he was a member of the Pangu Parti and his views on self-goverment were probably too inflexible for the conservative villagers (Lawrence 1967:76).

In all the seats, except the Regional, the number of candidates rose, as did their educational qualifications. Whereas in the 1968 elections many of those who stood were men with more traditional qualifications and many were local government councillors, in the 1972 elections the demonstratable possession of European skills became much more important as a qualification for candidature. The majority of candidates had some formal education and many teachers and public servants stood for election The exception to this pattern was in the new Usino-Bundi Open electorate, where the majority of candidates were councillors with few formal educational

qualifications (General Information, Chief Electoral Office 1972:34-39)

An examination of the candidates for the new seat of Madang illustrate these changes. Six candidates ran for the election. One, Philip Hancock, was an Australian, but he did virtually no campaigning and remained an unknown quantity among the electors (Morauta 1976:107). The other candidates had qualifications which showed that they had interacted closely with the European world. Hon Pipoi, for example, had started his career as a Lutheran Mission schoolteacher ending up as a member of the Tusbab High School board of governors, although he had given up education to open a trade store. He, like Angmai, was also a member of the Ambenob Council. Another member of the Tusbab board of governors was Kaukesa Kewa Kamo and he too, had trained as a Lutheran Mission teacher before joining the Department of Public Works as a carpenter. Askim Siming trained with the Lutheran Mission as a health worker, and in that capacity he had travelled overseas, but after some twenty years of serving the church in this capacity he resigned to become a cattle farmer. Even the youngest candidate, Job Sogasog, who was twenty-five, was able to show that he was qualified to operate in a European world. He, like the previous candidates, had been Lutheran educated, but rather than make his career within the

church, had joined the Pacific Island Regiment and through them had been trained as a plant operator. When he returned to Madang he was able find employment with the Department of Civil Aviation in that capacity (ibid:35).

There were, however only two candidates of consequence in the electorate, Job Sogasog and Angmai Bilas and their contest introduced the people of the electorate to party politics and clear political choices. Job was a Pangu Parti candidate. The party had established itself in the town, where it had, by 1972, a strong organization, with a local committee and a number of members on the Town Council. The town had grown rapidly in the past few years and the questions of education and job opportunities were paramount to many of those who had moved there. The sharp contrast between the newly-arrived squatters and the affluent Europeans made the idea of self-government very appealing to those with very little, for it was assumed that as soon as self-government was granted the Europeans would leave and the migrants could attain their goods and their jobs. Job denounced such wild ideas, but, the ideas stayed and so did much of the support. Pangu also emphasised traditional ideas and values and this part of the platform attracted cargo cultist support (Morauta 1976:103). It also gave Angmai a clear point of debate.

Angmai had done well in the previous Assembly. He had become Minister for Trade and Industry and had supported large-scale development in the region, as well as building roads in the local area. He had joined the United Party and although he advocated self-government he thought it should come later rather than sooner. He also remained implacably opposed to the cargo cultists. Because the Pangu Parti's organization was superior to that of the United Party, Job and his supporters were able to get to more villages than Angmai; nevertheless, voting appeared to follow much the same pattern as it had in the previous elections. Although Job and Pangu gained support for their policies from the town and from the cultists, this was not enough to defeat Angmai and the conservative Christian vote in the surrounding villages.

On the Rai Coast, Yali decided that he would not stand again, but nominated one of his lieutenants, Dui Yangsai, to do so in his place. After a great deal of indecisiveness, Yali decided to support the Pangu Parti because of its advocacy of traditional ways. However, his support was repudiated by the party and Michael Somare stated publically in Madang that Pangu would have nothing to do with cargoists (Lawrence 1976:85). John Poe, representing the PPP, recontested the seat. He could point to his achievements, mainly the development of some roads in

the area, and he was again supported by the majority of the Rai Coast Council. Although his vote was down on the previous election, because of the larger number of candidates standing, Poe won quite decisively (ibid 1976:89).

In the Bogia Open, the election was won very easily by Stanis To Liman, a Tolai, who was not only the head teacher of the administration school on Manam Island, but had also had worked as an interpreter in the Legislative Council and later in the House of Assembly. Like the people of the Rai coast, the voters of Bogia were prepared to vote for an outsider if that person appeared to be equipped with the knowledge which would enable him to understand and master the new political situation. In Sumkar, John Middleton again won on the first count. His nearest rival was the Pangu candidate, Kare Maor, from Waskia. Clearly, however, the people of the electorate remained conservative. In Usino-Bundi, Marcus Kawo outpolled his rivals because he was the only one of the candidates in the electorate who conducted a campaign outside his immediate his local area. In the Middle Ramu electorate the electoral race had been very close. None of the contenders were well educated, except a European who contested the seat although he was not well known in the area, having spent most of his working life in Papua New Guinea in the East Sepik

region. The eventual winner was Kui Baiyang, who had worked with Jim McKinnon as his interpreter.

A disappointing feature of the election was the further decline in voting numbers and the number of voters on the electoral roll who participated in the election dropped to 49 per cent throughout the region. The Regional Electorate had the lowest voter turnout in the country (Report of the Chief Electoral Officer, 1973:33) and the Madang Open electorate had a participation rate of only 38 per cent (ibid:28). The administration had tried to make up for its tardiness in the previous elections by introducing an education programme which aimed at increasing general political awareness by sending patrols into villages to explain ideas about politics, economics, and how the House of Assembly operated. These patrols proved to be very popular. However, the political situation in Papau New Guinea changed as it became evident that self-government would be the major issue of the forthcoming elections and there was little time to explain the implications of this. Moreover, parties, which had hitherto been treated with suspicion, now were now becoming a major force within Papua New Guinea politics and little explanation of what they were, or how they worked was available to the villagers. The the education process conducted by the administration was only partially completed by the time of the elections and

it may well be that the rapid changes so confused people that they avoided the election altogether. Lawrence suggested other reasons for the lower participation rate, such as more people away from the district, the difficulty of absentee absentee, disenchantment with representatives, influenza in Usino-Bundi and disappointment at the failure of quick results to materialize from the previous elections (ibid:87).

The big losers in the election, however, were the cargo cultists. The previous election marked the zenith of their political influence. The decline was due, in part, to Yali's decision not to take a direct part in the election, for the charisma of the leader was a major element in the strength of the movement. Nor was Yali able to organize suitable candidates to stand for electorates other than the Rai coast. The failure of the cargoists to make a political stand may have accounted for the decline in voter participation in areas where the movement was still strong, although many cargoists voted for the Pangu candidates.

Another feature to emerge from the 1972 elections (in common with other parts of the country) was localization of the votes. This was especially evident in Usino-Bundi where most of the candidates received votes only from their own ethnic groups. This trend was also evident on parts of the Rai

Coast, where five candidates besides Poe and Dui stood for election, and although none did well, because they gained votes only from their own local area, they reduced the margins of the front runners (ibid:89). In other parts of the district, the traditional politics of clans and villages did not play a large part in determining the election; party politics and church versus cargoist allegiance was far more significant. Because of this, many people in Madang were able to put ethnic differences aside and look to the larger issues (Morauta 1976:113).

The national election results in many parts of the Madang district suggest that the people of the district, although still seeking equivalence with Europeans, were prepared to try new methods to achieve it. This choice involved the rejection of cargo cults by the majority of electors in favour of the election of representatives who were able to demonstrate European skills. The choice between old ways and new ways cut across clan and tribal lines. Paradoxically, the adoption of the new ways meant that immediate independence had to be rejected so that more skills could be learnt from Europeans. Thus, while it might appear that the majority of electors in Madang were conservative and timid, it might equally be argued that they were, in fact, radical, flexible and pragmatic.

CHAPTER NINE

A LEGACY OF NEGLECT

While political reforms advanced rapidly after 1964, reforms in other areas, especially in education and economic development did not keep pace even after the impetus of the initiatives of the 1950s. This tardiness affected the people of the Madang region, in the urban and the rural districts. The infrastructure which should have been the foundation on which the district could evolve after independence did not develop and the Madang people were given few opportunities to interact with the wider world beyond their village and their district.

Because of the change in attitude of Australian voters after the war in the Pacific, the administration of the Territory now had far more funds available for development than it had in prewar days. One of the areas in need of urgent reform was the education system. Indeed, in the period prior to the war, education in the Madang district would have been non-existent without the effort of the missions. Even after the war the administration remained heavily reliant on the missions to deliver education to the villagers. However, the mission education system, especially that provided by the Lutherans, was often less than satisfactory.

The Lutheran schools had been destroyed by the war. The cargo movement in the immediate post-war period had made it difficult to re-establish them and even when they had been re-established, the standard of education provided by the mission was questionable. Throughout the southern part of the district, the Lutherans continued to teach their pupils in the Graged language, rather than in English, or even tokpisin. As one patrol officer commented, the system hardly seemed appropriate for the development of the Territory (Johnson, Patrol Report Madang No. 12, 1954-55); it certainly seemed to be an unrealistic policy which would disadvantage any Madang student wanting to enter a mainstream eductional programme. However, the Lutheran printing press at Nagada continued to churn out grammar books, dictionaries and other school literature in a language as foreign to most villagers as English (De'Ath 1981:75).

It was not only the inadequacy of the Lutheran education system which created problems for villagers, but the terms by which they had to accept the Lutheran education system. The Lutherans were keen to set up new schools, especialy in those areas which had been affected by Yali's teachings, but their schools were not secular and villagers were expected to reciprocate the offer of education by giving up many of their magic rituals. Villagers

were therefore left with a difficult choice. Many villagers could see a practical use for eduction, but knew that the mission's conditions would undermine their traditional way of life, including the production of food. Some villagers opted for a compromise and allowed some of their children to be educated, so that they could look after the village enterprises. Other children were kept away from school and learned traditional rituals so that normal village life could be maintained. Such a solution created a divided village (Lawrence 1953:572).

Initially, because of the lack of resources, the administration wanted to avoid the duplication of educational services and to retain mission schools in those areas where they were already established, on condition that 'the missions are able and willing, in due course, to conduct schools in their areas in lines proscribed by the Administration' (W.C. Groves, quoted in Smith 1975:27). Because the Lutheran schools continued to teach in Graged, the administration eventually refused to provide subsidies for them, and by the mid-1960s these village schools ceased to exist (De'Ath 1981:75). In spite of the inadequacies of the Lutheran education programmes, the loss of the Lutheran village schools seriously disadvantaged many in the Madang district because the government schools designed to replace them were not set up quickly enough.

The Catholic School system continued to expand in the district, in spite of the difficulties which were raised by the Church over the question of government funding when it was thought that such funding would compromise the autonomy of the schools. By 1970, of the 17,090 children attending shool in the district (Smith 1975:70, some 11,926 attended Catholic schools (De'Ath 1981:68).

Although the children of the Madang district had a better chance of acquiring an education than children from some areas, especially the newly opened-up highlands, nevertheless educational opportunities in the district were poor,compared in comparison with other areas which had a long history of colonization. While barely fifty per cent of primary-aged children were able to attend school in the Madang district, ninety-six per cent of children attended school in New Ireland and eighty-four per cent of children in New Britain were enrolled. Furthermore, there were few facilities in Madang for education beyond primary school (Smith 1970: 70) There were were only five high schools, two of them run by the Catholic Church to serve the entire district, and there was no national high school. There was, however, a teachers' college just outside the town.

Although for a short time, in the 1950s, Madang town flourished as a port town serving the developing

highlands, generally, the district remained an economic backwater in the period leading to independence. While it is true that the Australian government was far more generous in fostering economic development in the Territory in the post-war days, and expenditure on infra-structure depended very much on the distribution of natural resources. Thus funds were diverted from Madang to areas which were thought to have greater economic potential. This policy meant that the roads which the UN had deemed necessary for the economic develpment of the district were not forthcoming. In consequence, large-scale European investment did not materialize, nor did indigenous cash cropping.

In the 1950s, economic optimism was high in Madang town. By 1953, copra production had regained its pre-war levels and agricultural exports had reached £1,000.000 (Madang Government Station Report 1953-54). Such was the optimism about copra, that W.R.Carpenter had established a desiccated coconut factory on Biliau Island in the Madang Harbour (Pacific Islands Monthly, June 1950:39). The airport and harbour, serviced the rapidly developng highlands region. However, from 1960, when the highway to the highlands was opened and commodities and services began to be redirected through the port of Lae, Madang stagnated. In 1962 the tonnages which passed through Lae and Madang ports, respectively, were:

99,100 and 86,868 (TPNG Report 1961-62:259). Five years later, the respective tonnages were: 230,523 and 123,717 (TPNG Report 1966-67:327). By 1971 the respective figures were 544,046 and 133,924 (TPNG Report 1970-71:329).

Madang, however, remained a service town and the administrative centre for the district. Some industry also developed in the town. W.D. Wills established a cigarette factory in the 1960. In 1968 a Japanese company, Jant, was granted a timber lease and the company commenced operations, clear felling the Trans-Gogol area, for both logs and wood chips. Wewak Timbers, a fledgling tourist industry and a soft drink factory also developed at this time.

While these industries provided some employment opportunities, they could not employ all those who came into the town looking for work and a large pool of unemployed people began to develop, for Madang, like the other large towns of the Territory, began to act as a magnet for those seeking a change from village life. After the indenture system was overhauled, villagers still left their villages to find work, but now, instead of looking for work on plantations (although this sector remained the largest employer of labour), many began to look for opportunities within the towns. There was a variety of reasons for this; the attraction of life in the towns compared with life in the villages; the need

for paid employment to pay taxes; the presence of better eductional opportunities for their children and so on. Often, rather than returning home, these migrants stayed in the urban areas, like those in Madang, making a new home for themselves (De'Ath 1982:83). Those who came to Madang in the pre-independence years were not just people from the district itself; they came from other areas, especially the highlands and the Sepik. Their presence created new difficulties for the town's original inhabitants because the newcomers camped on their land. Many Sepiks settled first on Biliau Island until the islanders took the matter up with the administration and demanded their land back. To solve the problem, the administration created one of the first no-covenant schemes in the country, at Sisiak, just beyond the town's boundaries (Curtain 1978:69). However, many of the new urban dwellers simply set up shanty settlements on land that did not belong to them.

In spite of the economic setbacks, the town continued to attract migrants and the population grew steadily; by 1971 Madang was the third largest urban centre in the Territory, with a population of 15,361 (Miskaram 1981:78). However, the local people were not the main beneficiaries of that growth. Economic power and prestige stayed in the hands of the non-indigenous population. The average wage for an

urban worker in 1963 was only $ 6.75 a week and included accommodation, although skilled workers could earn as much as $20 a week (Stevenson 1968:118). These wages compared very poorly with those of the Europeans and many workers in Madang felt a sense of injustice and resentment at the inequality of the system. Skilled workers, in particular, argued that they did the same job and had the same responsibilities as Europeans, but were paid only a fraction of the European wage (ibid:124). There were few ways in which workers could deal with this problem. Many unskilled workers simply moved from job to job, looking for better pay. Others joined trade unions.

Trade unions were permitted by the administration from 1960. While the administration did not actually foster them, it was prepared to assist in setting them up. In this way the administration thought that it would be able to control the unions through the Department of Labour and the assumption proved to be correct. In 1962 laws were passed which gave the right of free association to unions and drew up guidelines for conciliation and arbitration in the case of disputes. The right to strike was granted, but only if a secret ballot was first carried out, supervised by the Department of Industry. Even though the strike provisions were very restrictive, there was an

outcry from the planters over the liberalization of working conditions and to appease this still powerful faction the right to strike was denied to plantation workers (ibid:113).

Among the trade unions which formed in the larger urban areas was the Madang Workers Association. The leadership of this union came from an educated minority, but the majority of it members were illiterate and usually unskilled workers. It was unfortunate that the Madang Workers Association was unable to attract more skilled workers, but the latter preferred to join their own specific unions, such as the Teachers Union. It was also unfortunate, but hardly surprising, that the expectations of the members were far greater than the results which their representatives were able to achieve for them. Many thought that by merely joining the trade union their demands for prestigious European goods would be met; at one stage, in 1966, there were requests for a $40 weekly wage (ibid:129).

The frustration of not being able to obtain meaningful gains sometimes led to illegal wild cat strikes. These strikes revealed the true powerlessness of the unskilled Madang worker. In 1964 a wild cat strike was called by workers at Madang Contractors over longstanding wage and working condition grievances. As a result of the strike most of the unskilled workers were dismissed as well as

many of the skilled ones. In 1965, sixty workers stopped work at the cigarette factory. They were dismissed immediately and new workers hired to replace them (ibid:129). It was, therefore, virtually impossible for the union to negotiate for more than the smallest benefits because there was such an oversupply of unskilled workers. Most workers found this unsatisfactory and union numbers declined.

While the indigenous people in the town were unable to gain economic power, their counterparts in the rural areas were even more disadvantaged; some areas in the district, even in the 1950s, had little or no contact with the administration. The Adelbert Ranges were still a wild region which was difficult to control. There were no tokpisin speakers, which made communication very difficult. In an attempt to bring the area under control, the administration brought a group of villagers to Madang town to see for themselves the 'wonders of civilization'. Apparently the exercise was a success because one of the villagers 'has become a staunch government man and will be a great help in furthering government influence throughout the region' (Bell, Patrol Report, Madang, No. 7, 1952-53).

There were areas of the district which had never before had any contact with the administration and, indeed, had avoided contact with outside influences

altogether. The people of the Guam River area, for example, avoided all contact with Europeans, even to the extent of refusing to use the government health facilities at Bogia and Annaberg (Taylor, Patrol Report, Madang Nov. 1951-Jan.1952).

There were very few sources of income for the rural villager. Plantation workers were very poorly paid, earning as little as $40 a year. The justification put forward by the planters for such low wages was that the cost of living for the rural worker was much less than that of his urban counterpart since the rural worker had access to gardens and could grow his own food. In spite of the seemingly poor rewards, the plantation worker did have better access to the cash economy than his village counterpart. Indigenous cash cropping had almost failed in the district. In 1967, the estimated production of cocoa and copra by villagers was only 167 tons and 1,730 tons, respectively. In East New Britain, production in the same period was 3,720 tons of cocoa and 11,054 tons of copra (Finney 1970:32). The Rai Coast coffee industry became moribund. There was a move, led by Bruce Jephcott in 1962, to introduce cattle production into the Ramu Valley and along the fertile areas of the Rai Coast. However, the marketing of the cattle proved difficult and by independence more than three-quarters of the beef cattle in the Madang district were bred by

Europeans, while for the village farmer cattle frequently became a status symbol rather than a source of income (King 1981:56).

The lack of development was due to several factors, many of which have been discussed above in chapter six. However, those problems which were evident in the early stages of cash cropping, especially the problems associated with getting the crops to market, were not solved in the succeeding decades. The development of the coffee industry in the highlands, which was perceived as more profitable crop for Europeans as well as Papua New Guineans, had diverted investment away from the coastal regions. As a result,the network of roads which had been visualized for the district failed to materialize and this made it difficult for the village producers to get their goods to the market. One of the attractions of the Jant clear-felling operation was the promise of the roads which the development would bring in the Trans-Gogol region. A comparison of accessibility of roads to villagers in various districts indicated the disadvantage under which the Madang village producer laboured:

District	Estimated percentage of people living near roads.
East New Britain	70
Eastern Highlands	50
Chimbu	40
Western Highlands	35
Madang	20
Manus	10

(Finney:31).

Of course some districts had even poorer road services than Madang; however, this does not negate the fact that the administration was seen as unwilling to support its promotion of cash cropping in the Madang district by providing an infrastructure to enable it to work. It is little wonder that Madang villagers of the Madang district lost any initial enthusiasm they had to acquire an income through cash cropping. Consequently the income from cash cropping in the Madang district remained far lower than in other districts.

District	Per Capita Income
East New Britain	29.07 $
Eastern Highlands	8.53 $
Chimbu	4.96 $
Western Highlands	4.78 $
Manus	4.78 $
Madang	1.68 $

(ibid :33).

The administration tried to improve the health of the villagers with the introduction of aid posts. The scheme, which was introduced in 1946, was an ingenious outreach programme designed to provide primary health care to villages through trained local people. By independence, Madang was better served than most districts. The missions were also major providers of health care in the district. Yagaum hospital, set up the Lutherans just outside Madang town, was a two hundred bed hospital (De'Ath 1981:75). The Lutherans also provided a hospital on Karkar, while the Catholics provided a hospital at Alexishafen.

Other welfare programmes were introduced. Women's Clubs were formed throughout the Territory with the aim of raising village living standards through instruction in hygiene, nutrition, cooking, sewing and infant welfare, as well as being a focus for sport and social activities. Fifteen of these clubs were formed in Madang. While the importance of the role of women in raising village living standards was rightfully acknowledged by the administration, without substantial infrastructure to give them greater economic opportunities and provide more access to education as well as initiatives which would encourage women to have a greater say in politics, such organizations had only limited effectiveness.

After ninety years of colonization, the colonizers had bequeathed the people of the Madang district very little in the way infra-structure on which to develop an independent society. No wonder the majority of people in the district wanted more development before they were left to fend for themselves. Certainly the truncation of development in Madang re-enforces Howlett's argument that the combination of indigenous socio-economic characteristics and development policies meant that change in Papua New Guinea 'is in a terminal stage' and that modernization is unlikely to occur (Howlett 1973:273). The legacy of neglect made for an uncertain future for Madang which would be reliant on the equitable distribution of wealth from the new national government and continuing aid from Australia.

CONCLUSION

Independence Day, on 15 September 1975, brought down the curtain on ninety years of colonization in the Madang district. The effects of colonization within the district had not been uniform. At one extreme, the people of the north coast had found the colonization process to be an unpleasant and sometimes violent experience and the issue of land loss was still an unresolved source of discontent. At the other end of the spectrum, in the more remote areas, where the contact between the colonizers and villagers had been limited, colonization had been a more benign event. Between the two extremes lay confusion, frustration and misunderstanding.

Much of the confusion which confronted the Madang villager was created by the colonial policies. Prior to World War II, the policies were designed solely for colonial profit, so that while the Madang people were involved with the changes which the policies brought, they were the victims of changes, and not the beneficiaries. The policies of the German New Guinea Company were violent and exploitative. Its successor, the German Imperial Administration, under Hahl, implemented policies which were less exploitive and more systematic, but, they, likewise, were designed for the benefit of settlers and any attempt to involve the villagers in the political or economic processes of the

colony was an authoritarian action rather than a genuine attempt at inclusiveness. The breathtaking incompetence of the ANMEF's regressive policies did nothing to foster ~~or~~ improved race relations and, were, thankfully, short lived. However, even the policies of the mandated administration, although far more humane than those of its predecessor were frequently muddled and incompatible. Village life was to be preserved. The administration, however, continued to impose labour laws, collect head tax and alienate village land and so disrupt village life and the villagers were excluded from the policy making processes. Thus, although many villagers came into contact with the European way of life in this pre-World War II period, such contact was only superficial.

Because of the exclusivity of the European rule, villagers were confronted with two interrelated problems which they were unable to resolve and which formed the crux of their difficulties with the colonial process and their relations with the colonists. The first of these problems was the inability of villagers to achieve equivalence with Europeans in terms of status and political power. The second problem was the continuing failure of villagers to be able to access the source of European wealth, to which they believed they were rightly entitled. Because the colonists were either ignorant or indifferent to these concerns they could, therefore, provide no solution, and so the only option open to the

Madang people to try to resolve these problems, was to do so in their own terms, with the result that cargo movements began to develop in the district in the period prior to World War II.

The role and importance of cargo cults has been central to previous studies of the impact of colonization in Madang. It has been generally agreed by the anthropologists who have studied the region, (Lawrence, McSwain, Morauta, Burridge and Hannemann in particular), that the people of the Madang sea-board are deeply religious. Lawrence, after thirty years working in the area, has summed up their attitude thus:

> The people of southern Madang Province are deeply religious...they are essentially pragmatic about their beliefs: as they do not genuinely conceive supernatural realm within the cosmos, they believe that gods and spirits inhabit the terrestrial world around them and are as real as human being themselves...religion of some kind is an essential ingredient and a paramount intellectual interest in their daily life. It shapes their activities and governs their thinking (Lawrence 1988:15).

Therefore, it has been argued, that because the people were so deeply religious, their problems could only be solved in religious terms and according to Lawrence 'Cargoism is a logical modern continuum of traditional

religion' (Lawrence 1982:6) Hence the right religious ritual had to be found which would manipulate the deities into revealing the access to cargo. Moreover, it has been argued, that although the rituals might change over time, or may not be in evidence at all, the underlying philosophy behind the rituals remained (McSwain 1977:182).

An alternative to seeking this correct ritual, was to try to find a 'tame white man' who would reveal the secret to the access to cargo. Because of the nature of the colonial experience, the white men who showed most willingness to interact on a more intimate basis with the village people were the missionaries. However, the missionaries did not understand what their role was perceived to be and so relations between the villagers and the missionaries frequently soured as these white men remained untamed. Thus, the attitude of the Madang people towards their colonizers, in the period before the war in the Pacific, was characterized by ambivalence. On the one hand the villagers resented their exclusion from cargo, status and power which would gain them equivalence with their colonizers, but, on the other, they also needed to cultivate amenable Europeans in an effort to have them reveal the source of the cargo. This ambivalence helps to explain why there was relatively little violence in the district during this period even though many of the Madang people were treated extremely poorly.

After World War II, more options were available to the people of the district to improve their political status and economic prospects as the new administration introduced a variety of innovative policies. Unfortunately, many of these policies appear to have been little more than 'bright ideas' with not enough thought given to their impact, practicability or suitability for the villagers who were to implement them. Often programmes were instituted before sufficient infrastructure had been put into place or training had been implemented. Thus while the policies did provide an option to the cargo cults for villagers to initiate change, they did little to increase villagers' comprehension of the world beyond the village and misunderstandings continued to arise.

The continued existence of cargo cults in this period, despite the administration's initiatives, indicated that many Madang people continued to retain their old beliefs and Lawrence and McSwain are of the opinion that there was virtually no change at all in people's ideas (Lawrence 1982:59:McSwain 1977:169). They argue that the adoption of administrative policy by villagers was only a change in tactic rather than a change in philosophy and that while there might not be overt cargoist actions, cargoist thinking remained strong. Both anthropologists, however, use a very broad brush to paint the picture of cargoist thinking in the postwar period, providing examples such as a student's

denial of the theory of evolution, (Lawrence 1964:203) and a villager's problem with the source of the Karkar money supply (McSwain 1977:179). It could equally be argued, however, that many people did in fact reject cargoism and embrace the new ideas but those ideas were greatly misunderstood and it is probable that many of those who rejected cargoism had no ~~more~~ greater understanding of the complex world beyond the village than did the cargoists. The correlation between the existence of cargo cults and the ability to understand new concepts can also be questioned in another way. Despite the minimal prewar contact and little, or no history of cargoism in the mountainous district around Bundi, villagers there demonstrated no greater comprehension of the economic and political changes than did villagers on the coast.

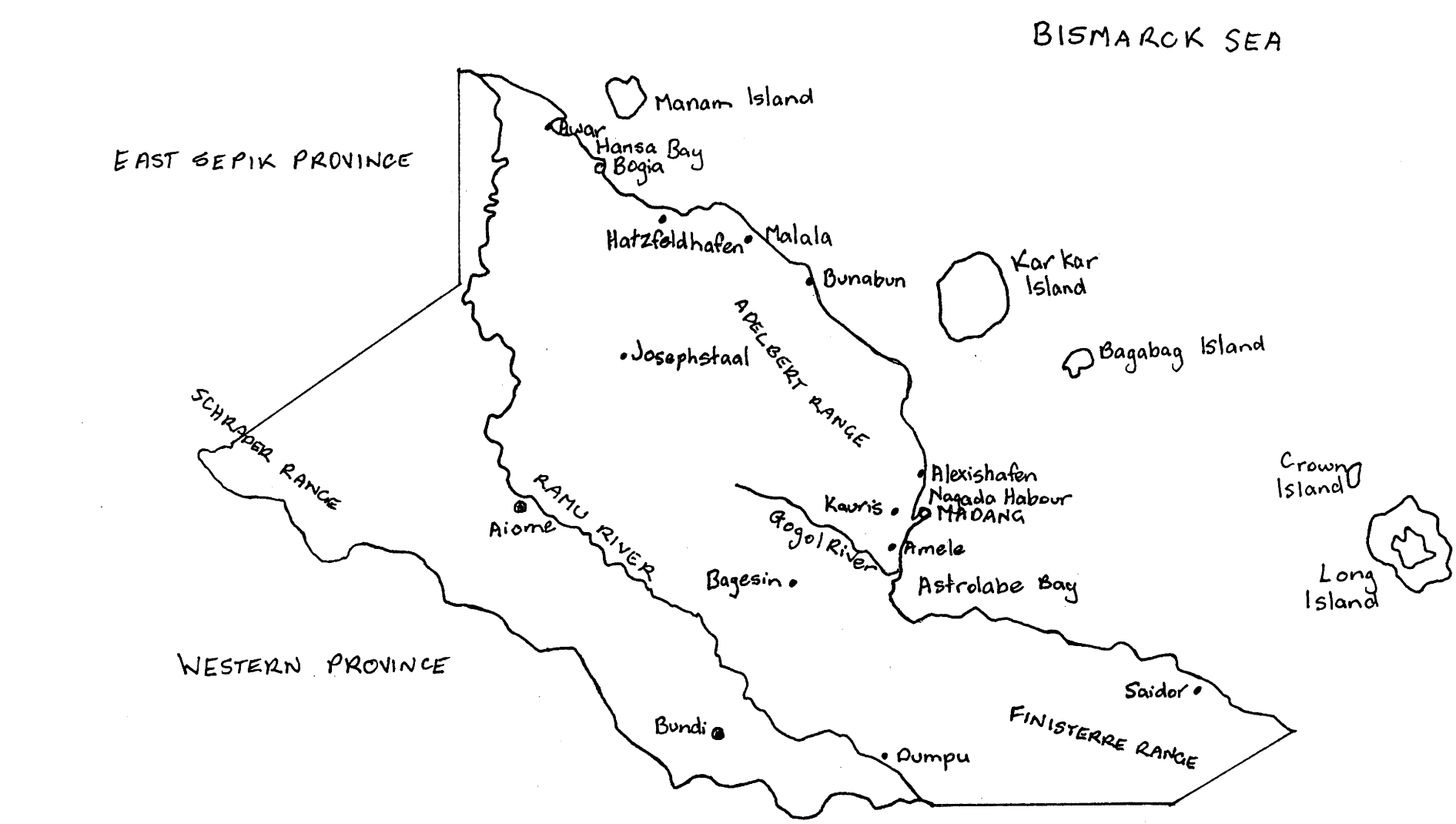
Evidence suggests that people did take advantage of the opportunities presented by the administration's changes in policy to seek wealth in areas other than cargoism. Gulu and Irakau were two example of Madangs who even in the 1950s, were willing to try other methods. Later leaders, such as Angmai Bilas also rejected cargoism as a vehicle for change. The most emphatic rejection of cargoism, however, came in the national elections of 1968, where as Louise Morauta has demonstrated, the coastal people understood that there was a clear ideological choice to be made between cargoism and the

administration's initiatives and the majority chose to take the new directions. The rejection of Yali at the polls showed that many people thought that cargoism could no longer supply the answers to the changes which they were seeking, but the new initiatives introduced by the postwar administration, although promising to give the Madang people new ways of acquire status, wealth and political power, failed to provide villagers with sufficient infrastructure and skills to make the promises a reality.

Because of the difficulties presented by many of the new policies and the inadequate understanding that most Madangs possessed of the way in which European economics and politics worked, some Madangs took a pragmatic approach to the implementation of the changes and enlisted the help of those whom they perceived to have more appropriate skills. Thus, when local councils stumbled, Madangs accepted multiracial councils. Ethnically based voting patterns gave way to voting patterns which promised to deliver the man with the best skills to deal with the new situation of national government elections. When bisnis ventures became difficult, European expertise was sought to improve them. The pragmatic responses of the Madangs suggests a lack confidence in their ability to cope with the new situations and the continued preference which the Madang people show for non-Madang representation in the National Parliament indicates that this may still be the case.

The inability of the Madang people to understand the wider world with which they were now involved, together with their reliance on the skills of others whom they perceive to be more valuable than their own, further suggests that the Madang people could be open to exploitation in the future.

Thus, while it can perhaps be argued that the colonization process in Madang was less traumatic than in other parts of the world, even for those who suffered land loss, the process, nevertheless, did not equip the people with the skills, knowledge and understanding for them to be able to take their place confidently in the wider world.



MAP OF

MADANG PROVINCE

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